

KRIKFaastavel	S	KraakFistavel
KrakFaastevil	I	KrekFistaaval
KraakFisteval	X	KRIKFestavaal
KrekFistavaal	T	KrakFestaavil
KRIKFestaaval	E	KraakFastevil
KrakFestivaal	N	KrekFastivaal
KRIKFastaaavel	T	KraakFestival
KrakFisteavaal	H	KrekFaastavil
KraakFastivel	I	KRIKFaasteval
KrekFastavil	S	KrakFaastivel
KRIKFastevaal	U	KraakFestavil
KrakFistaavel	E	KrekFaastival

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KRAMP ANGER AS MUCH AS SHAME: KRAMP is the noisy solo sound art project of visual artist Stijn Wybouw. Through tape manipulations and odd percussions, he sets out to fulfill a destiny of a red-faced alter ego that very much exists.

JOERI BRUYNINCKX

JOERI BRUYNINCKX How did it all start for you?
STIJN WYBOUW From a very young age I've been playing in bands and collected punk and garage rock tapes.

JB And how did KRAMP begin?
SW Mainly I began making DIY recordings and distributing them around – I was always fascinated by that approach. I also started making more and more tape recordings, and this is how I got into KRAMP, my solo project.

JB What about the name KRAMP?
SW A cramp is something that bothers you and has to come out in one way or another. In this case, it was the urge to get music out of my system. From the beginning I also found it very important to do everything myself with KRAMP: everything from the recording of the music to the visual aspect of it.

JB Yeah, you come from a visual arts background. So how did you get into music?
SW KRAMP is my alter ego that runs through my music AND my visual art.

JB So these are linked to each other, there's no real difference?
SW There's no difference. When I play live, the visual part is as important as the audio part. Not only for the audience, also for myself.

JB How so?
SW KRAMP is like a character to me. I express my alter ego by painting my face red.

JB Why red?
SW In cartoons, red is the color used to express anger and shame. When I paint my face red, it's as if I'm preparing for a ritual. Once the red paint is on, I become KRAMP.

JB Where did you get this idea?
SW From black metal bands. This all seems very heavy, but first they isolate themselves and put their corpse paint on.



KRAMP © Stijn Wybouw

JB Your music also has something dirty.
SW This comes from my fascination for home tapers and lo-fi recordings. I love to manipulate sound until I lose control. I do this by playing recordings backwards, for example, and then recording over these again. I also like to record with old tape recorders, as well as using old instruments or instruments that I don't know how to play. I then cut and paste these recordings into new compositions – this way I get suprised by my own recordings. The obscurity of the sounds create a “mystic bond” between the recording and the listener, which intriges me. I love to work fast and I love to record a lot. I like to record with a Zoom or a tape deck, because this way I can make fast and unclean recordings.

JB Your music reminds me of Aaron Dilloway, Jason Lescalleet and Dylan Nyoukis. But also of older stuff like LAFMS, and even Henry Chopin.
SW All these artists are great, of course, but what I find most interesting for myself is finding links with other types of music.

JB Like?
SW Like folk or non-musical recordings where the experience of music comes first. The sound of my surroundings is also a big inspiration. I find it very important that KRAMP is not about the technical aspect of playing music: it's about the experience, and about being suprised by sound. I think that's an attitude I share with the artists you mentioned.

ORPHAN FAIRYTALE Antwerp mid-January. I run into Orphan Fairytale (Eva Van Deuren) on the street as she opens the door to the house she moved into recently. A black and white cat with a little bell comes to greet us, purring and tinkling all the way up the stairs. I like it here. We make some herbal tea with honey and lemon and have a cozy chat at the kitchen table.

AMBER MEULENIJZER

AMBER MEULENIJZER Eva, the last time we saw each other I was disguised as a bush and you almost scalped your head with a mini fan while enchanting the audience with your harp sounds. In the meantime, the seasons have changed and we are here.
EVA VAN DEUREN Yeah, not a very good idea too untie my hair during a concert, haha. I've been living here since September. I've always lived in the city, but at a certain moment I was looking for some more peace, quiet and privacy. I was tired of the buzz of the city. Since there were always people around, I couldn't really take a break. I tried living in the countryside for a little while, but I found out that it was really not my cup of tea: it was too remote, like being in orbit in some far away place. I missed the city. It really feels like I lived in a different world for a while, and I'm very happy I moved back here.

AM Yes, it's a weird kind of balance, trying to combine a need for silence or calm and still needing the energy of the city. Does the city also influence your music?
EVD Yes it does. Being able to just go somewhere when you feel like it or easily maintaining your social network is quite important for me. Also the energy and dynamic of the city just gives you more input. Out in the countryside I really lived another kind of life. I'm glad I tried it, but it was not me.

AM But silence is also an important part of music or sound.
EVD I think silence is a bigger part of my work now than it used to be. I mean, the harp is also calmer than what I used to do. But I sometimes deliberately listen to nothing, just to wait and see what stirs inside me without being influenced by other things. I have been having some quite realistic dreams lately. Some nights ago I dreamt that I had to play somewhere and I didn't play any of the stuff I had prepared. I completely blacked out and played a lot of really old stuff – I didn't really know what to do. It was very weird waking up.

AM Are dreams important to you?
EVD Yeah, I do think about that. Sometimes I write them down or I keep a dream diary, but I never do it diligently or anything. Also, around the full moon you always have some stronger dreams. Recently I dreamed that I was flying. It had been a long time since I'd dreamed that, and I was glad those kind of dreams are back. Which reminds me: recently I played for a group of toddlers for the first time, and it was really nice. I had never done that before so I was a bit scared: I wasn't sure if they would like it, or if the sound would be enough to keep them busy. But I was wearing a long pink princess dress and the kids were all enchanted. It didn't take them much to enter this kind of world and it was really nice. After the concert it was like I was walking on clouds, the atmosphere was so soft. It made me think of trying more stuff with musical theatre or performance. In De Studio I once played in a giant decor by Gerard Leysen with mushrooms and a lot of fog. It's nice to be able to create this kind of magical environment.

AM Is it important for you to determine the setting you play in? To really draw the audience into your world?

EVD Of course, have you seen my room? It's full of mushrooms and unicorns, haha. I always have a tendency to decorate things, which automatically creates a very fairy tale-like mood.
AM All of a sudden it also gets a kind of ritualistic meaning.
EVD Yes, totally, I like it a lot when that happens.
AM Is sensuality important to you too? Something you like to play with while performing?
EVD Yeah, I like to use smells and spices live as well. A little rosemary and lavender, those kinds of stimulating things.
AM Yes, that does a lot, also because visually there is a lot happening. It really becomes a very sensual bath.

EVD For the record sleeve of *Comets Come Alive* I was wearing a cobra suit. We did a polaroid photo shoot at Baraque Michel with Michèle Matyn. I remember thinking how crazy it would be to see a bear while I was standing in the forest. I had a big hangover too, it was a very funny experience. But that was also quite a special atmosphere we created. In the development process polaroids are influenced by body heat, and Michèle put them in her clothes



Orphan Fairytale © Jan Selleslags

on different places on her body to get different colors. It's very cool.
AM In 2020 you will be releasing a record on KRAAK.
EVD Yes, it has been a while! I used to record a lot on cassettes, but my recorder slowly died. I've had a lot of these kind of technical problems lately, so I'm happy to be able to release something on vinyl again. I have also been working on a lot of stuff at the same time, so it has been difficult to choose or concentrate on just one thing.

AM You also posted a lot of older stuff online recently.
EVD While I was moving I found a lot of old tapes. Sometimes it's really nice to listen back to things you made a long time ago, and it's interesting to hear how you used to do certain things. Back then I was probably also more naive: I've been learning to play music by myself over the years, so it's nice to try to listen to it with new ears and see what you can learn from it now. That's probably also the reason I dream about it.

AM Creating sometimes has something cyclical, right?
EVD Yeah. It's nice to crawl back into your own oeuvre like that. It's also very funny how you sometimes really don't recognize yourself anymore.



Artwork by Vica Pacheco

KUUPUU **A NEW WAVE:** Ever since the myriad strange musics began oozing out of Finland a good while ago, Kuupuu is among the core company making up the ever-revolving ensembles of sound sculptors. During the current era, Kuupuu has been cooking up rumpled rhythms and dizzy serenades, shuffling from dank ambiance to more goofy and sweet expressions. Pretty debris gets spun, the straight stuff is twisted and expanded to open up the conventions through which we experience. Lately the musical collagist has also been exhibiting handwoven rugs as Jonna Karanka. The cloth works definitely feel like they're branching out from the same place as the sparkly tunes. It also bears mentioning that the totally dope, hypnotic ruler band Olimpia Splendid is Kuupuu's baby too. The latest Kuupuu release is a tape called *Plz Tell Me*, and Kuupuu indeed told me when I reached out to her to ask what's up.

HUNTIN SETELI

HUNTIN SETELI So, to begin with, what's interesting (to me at least) is what you've been reading. Has anything rung the bell lately (as we'd say in Finland)? Any recommendations?

JONNA KARANKA I'll just list some bell-ringing books from the past couple of years: Cosey Fanni Tutti, *Art, Sex, Music*; Dame Darcy, *Hi Jax & Hi Jinx (Life's a Pitch – And Then You Live Forever)*; Patti Smith, *M Train*; Koko Hubara, *Ruskeat tytöt*; Zadie Smith, *Swing Time*; Camara Laye, *The Radiance of the King*; Bill Hicks, *Love All The People*; Jeremy Narby, *The Cosmic Serpent*; Donna Tart, *The Goldfinch*; Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

HS Secondly, recipes are crucial for sure. Any current ones to share?

JK Well, broccoli is happening! Here's a recipe for an orange and tofu salad with peanut sauce taken from Elina Inananen's blog Chocochili. If you like, add some noodles to make it richer.

1 Fry 500 g of tofu, season with chili, jeera and salt 2 Chop down the broccoli. Peel and cut two oranges. Peel and cut two avocados. Wash and tear one or two bunches of lettuce 3 Whisk together two tablespoons of sugar-free peanut butter, juice of a lime, just a little water and some salt 4 Mix it on a plate, pour the sauce on top, enjoy!


HS So you moved out of the city. Any favorite sounds or other sensations in your new surroundings?

JK I live on the third floor and there is sunshine even in the winter! The plants

are doing better with some sun finally in their lives. It's not the countryside, really. Outside you can hear the motorway 24/7 and they're building another 7-story building next to the one I live in. Still, nearby there are cows and horses, the woods and some lakes, a nature reserve and the sea.

HS And how are the Sibboans? Any characters?

JK I like that people greet each other in the woods here. My favorite characters are the teenagers hanging out on the stairs of the library and sitting at the back of the bus all arrogant, blasting music from their phones.



Ryijy Kokonaan

VICA PACHECO PRESENTS: A SONG OF SPRINGTIME (XOPAN CUICATL)

Amoxcalco
pehua cuica,
yeyecohua,
quimoyahua xochitl,
on ahuia cuicatl.

Icahuaca cuicatl,
oyohualli ehuatihuitz,
zan quinanquiliya
toxochayacach.
Quimoyahua xochitl,
on ahuia cuicatl.

Xochiticpac cuica
in yectli cocoxqui,
ye con ya totoma
aitec.

Zan ye connanquilia
in nepapan quechol,
in yectli quechol,
in huel ya cuica.

Amoxtlacuilot in moyollo,
tociuaticaco,
in ticcuicanitl.
Xopan cala itec,
in fonteyahuiltiya.
Zan tic moyahua
in puyama xochitli,
in cacahua xochitli.

In ticuicanitl.
Xopan cala itec,
in fonteyahuiltiya.

From *Quince poetas del mundo nahuatl*
by Miguel Leon-Portilla

HS Any details of a fantasy lifestyle you'd like to share here? Any dream projects?

JK I mostly fantasize of having the time to concentrate on my own art practice. For the past seven years I've been part of the Sorbus collective with whom we've been making video works and performances, and running a gallery space as well. At the moment there's a strong urge to withdraw to the studio just to be by myself among balls of thread and music gear and to make textile art and music. One fantasy project will be realized this spring as I'll collaborate on a song with Finland's best rapper.

HS Have you been paying attention to the sphere of so-called mainstream music and other forms of entertainment? Has there been anything that you reacted to?

JK I have to confess I'm not really following too closely. I've been listening to the latest Solange, and I really like Weyes Blood (if that's mainstream?)

HS For a recent exhibition, you made a textile version of a fan letter you wrote to Madonna as a kid. Do you have any comparable heartfelt/irrational fan relationship to anyone or anything these days that you'd be willing to share?

JK Well, nothing as thorough or long-lasting comes to mind... Sure, there are shows, records, books, performances, artworks that still expand my consciousness. Last summer there was a performance at Kiasma [the museum of contemporary art in Helsinki] called *Let me be your fantasy* by a group of artists called Delta Venus, which was very impressive. The experience was empowering, and it even felt like all the drag/burlesque/voguing performances brought about this ecstatic feeling of camaraderie among the audience right there in the exhibition hall. I hadn't encountered that kind of feminist variété performance before. I was surprised and mesmerized.

HS What is a rock concert?

JK At its best it's shared aesthetic energy and cosmic vibrations.

HS Greetings to old and new friends in Belgium?

JK KRAAK is the best – like Fonal in Finland ♥

Kuupuu ©/Tuomo Tuovinen

■ CRASH TOTO ■ Crash Toto is a supergroup that sounds like Hawkwind gone mental. This outfit is formed by four explorers of cellars and off-spaces: Maarten Raskin and Steven Bertels of Swallowing Helmets and Lemones, Christophe Clebard (also of Martirio) who is known for his distorted Casio music, and Matthieu Levet, who terrorizes our dreams as Carrageenan (and with Pizza Noise Mafia/Carcass Identity). I interviewed them at Au Laboureur, but first had to discuss the details of the interview with their lawyer, Ernesto Gonzalez, who is well acquainted with the pitfalls of the underground.

NIELS LATOMME

NIELS LATOMME Originally our appointment was at Café Daringman, at 2am after Christophe's shift (he works there part-time), which inspired this question: is the music of Crash Toto meant for people of the night?

CHRISTOPHE CLÉBARD It's music for nightmare people. It's one big nightmare.
MATTHIEU LEVET I'm not sure if it's music for people.
MAARTEN RASKIN I think it's music for an intelligence software program.
cc Sex and nuclear stuff.
STEVEN BERTELS Matthieu, you're the brain behind it.
ML (*chuckles*) No, no.
cc Crash Toto makes music for drunk people.
ML It's for sure a band for the night, but I don't know about the people.
cc Our manager, Cornetto Rosso, is for sure a guy from the night.
MR It's not morning music.
SB It could be, though.
ERNESTO GONZALEZ It is traffic jam music.
SB It makes you wanna hit people. And honk.
EG The sound has a cyber tendency.
MR It's the future, cyber music. We'll still exist in 2050. Matthieu could write a program so we don't have to do anything, nor be there anymore.

NL Who is Cornetto Rosso?
cc He's the manager of Crash Toto. He already set up three shows.
MR Although we play only one show each year. After one show, we have to recover 365 days.
ML Cornetto showed up for the first show and then he disappeared with the money.

NL Word is that Crash Toto never rehearses. Is that true?
cc Me?

NL No, Crash Toto.
MR Yes, we just go on stage. We recorded a piece at Brasserie Atlas, which was a session that could be some sort of rehearsal. The first show was as support for Guttersnipe: we went straight from our jobs to play the show.
SB That was the first time we ever played together.
ML Nothing is planned.
MR But we do pizza meetings.
ML We wanted to play together, and then there was the name, that was invented by Maarten...
SB ... and then Guttersnipe asked us to find a place for them to play. We found a basement for them in the center of Brussels and decided to be their mental support.
MR We met David and Matthieu when we invited them to play at one of our Swallowing Helmets events. I missed playing normal drums, and Steven wanted to play bass again. Matthieu told me also that he had this Yamaha synth thing he wanted to use and David just became the frontman. But it's not that I don't like to rehearse, because actually I really want to. It's just that mostly our agendas don't allow it – Christophe and Matthieu tour a lot.
ML We can do more meetings.
SB And become a conceptual band.
cc Playing is cool, rehearsing is not.
SB Rehearsing can be cool, but it might be possible that when we try to recreate something from inside the rehearsal space, it would fuck up the concert. We never tried it, so we don't know how it would work.
ML But we could do at least five more shows without rehearsing, no?
SB You mean five more years? Hopefully all in Brussels.
cc I'll have to ask my lawyer what he thinks about five more years.
ML What was the best show, you think?

SB The one in Rotterdam I hated. That one in Atlas was better. What do you think, Matthieu?
ML I didn't like the one in Atlas. You see, we don't even have the same opinion about which was a good show.
cc We played only three shows? Not four?
SB No, we were going to play at Accueil Froid Nuke in Amiens. But very last minute after we loaded the car Romain called us to say that the PA system broke down and Ernesto had to play on it the day after. So he wanted to fix that. Then we tried to get a gig at the Queens but failed.
EG Ah. The famous Viper Pit concert when the drummer passed out after two songs. He drank too much, smoked too much, ate too many burritos and then drank Red Bull. He was backstage lying on the floor – only Mikey kept playing.

NL If Crash Toto was a body, which part is each of you?
MR David is easy.
cc I'll be the dick and testicles for sure. I go before.
MR He dives in. He's going viagra.
ML I'm the left nipple.
MR I'm the knee. Or maybe the cheek.
SB I could be the kidneys, I process all the dirt. I'm very close to David! I can kill you, I can put anything through you.
ML Is anyone the prostate?
MR Ernesto is the hand that stimulates the prostate, or keeps it above our heads. He's the lawyer, but we don't have money to pay him.
EG Money is non-existent in the Crash Toto world.

NL Lets visualize the body now: there's an aesthetic part (Matthieu), a soft side (Maarten), an essential part (Steven) and a connection to the world/girls (Christophe).
cc No, no... not to the girls, to the world. Or to the bathroom. I'm the toilet of crash Toto.

NL Is your band something that has to be meticulously cleaned to work properly, like a bike chain? Or does it need a dirty patina to work properly – like a Bialetti that should be a bit dirty to make good coffee?
cc I think there is no point, it's like shitting or vomiting: in the process, you don't think about shitting dirty or clean. You're just letting it out. It's romantic stuff. I don't think about it. Maybe I think about you people.

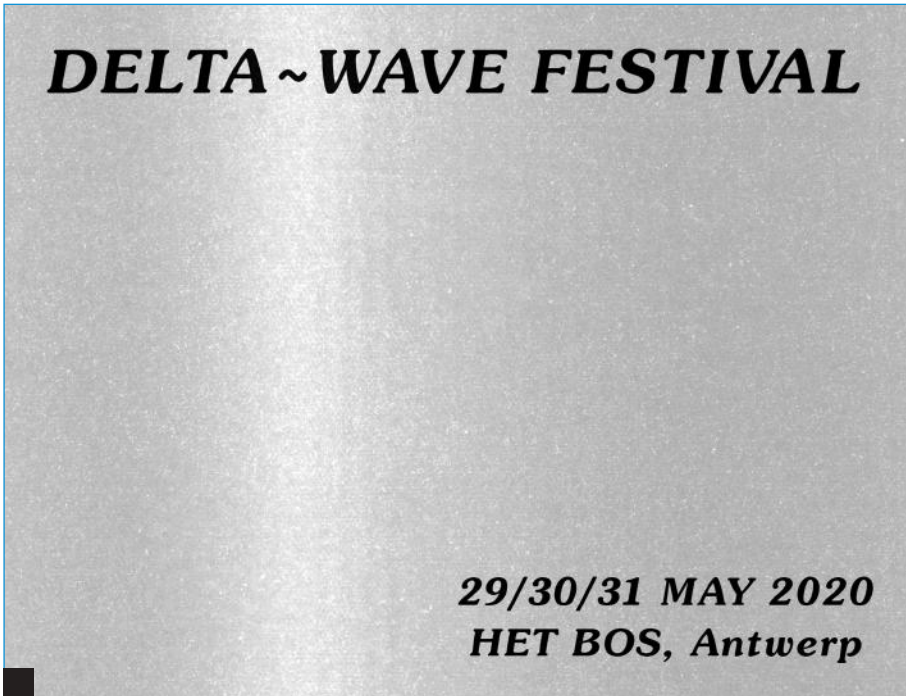
MR It's a tough question: do you want a clean or dirty life?
SB If you have to clean it a lot, it means that you have to put a lot of energy in it.
ML If you think about the tape we've recorded, we try to do it well. But in the end, was it clean?
SB No. If you record, you want to have the best recording possible. We don't want to make something deliberately trash. It happens like this or that, but we don't want to be shitty.
ML The way things work is restrained time and space, there is not much time to practice, nor a real rehearsal space. So we decided to work from there, and we thought “why not?”
MR In the beginning of a band it's nice to discover how the dynamic between people works. If the outcome is shitty, it is what it is. You see how it devolves; sometimes you think “this is too much.” I never thought about how Crash Toto should sound. Also we didn't know what was possible for the recording until it was taped. We recorded some more and then decided what the best parts were, or the best story. But we had no clue beforehand.
ML In a way, the identity of this project goes faster than its quality.
MR We had the name and the logo before there was actually a band. There was an identity before there was a musical product. It's scam rock.

NL It's not fake news, but fake music?
cc We are glam rock.
ML Uh... But then people come to the shows, so it's real.
MR Now we'll try to get a tour bus before there is a tour. Cornetto Rosso is fixing that.

NL The KRAAK van is for sale, I heard [Editor's note: FAKE NEWS]. But then you cannot play in cities.
SB That would be amazing. Let's go to the countryside then.



Crash Toto © Niels Latomme



sat. 29

FIESTA EN EL VACIO

A PHOSPHORESCENT MUSICAL HELL: Never mind the intense title, it's a personal attempt to make a poetic reference. It's actually mainly about busted synths, trap beats on a Bluetooth speaker facing the Atlantic Ocean, and making music into something *doable*.

ÉLÉONORE KENIS

*Como el viento sin alas encerrado en mis ojos
es la llamada de la muerte.
Sólo un ángel me enlazará al sol.
Dónde el ángel,
dónde su palabra.
Oh perforar con vino la suave necesidad de ser.*

“Fiesta en el Vacío” is the title of a short poem by Alejandra Pizarnik (1936–1972), one of Argentina’s major female poets. It could translate into:

*“Like the wingless wind locked in my eyes
this is the call of death.
Only an angel will embrace me in the sun.
But where the angel,
where his word?
Oh! perforate with wine the sweet need to be.”*

“I love her,” says Luna Cedrón, aka Fiesta en el Vacío, the-musical-project-not-the-poem. “Her work is both lyrical and super-depressing.” Pizarnik is often compared to Sylvia Plath for somewhat perfunctory reasons, or extra-literary ones at least: both questioned identity, both struggled with mental illness, both committed suicide. “Poetry may seem abstruse, stodgy sometimes. But when it touches you, it touches you in a different way than prose does in a very unique, hazy way. Beyond the deeply moving expression of angst that they convey, Pizarnik’s poems have a very bright quality. They’re beautiful. And there is something about this particular title, ‘Party in the Emptiness’, that struck me in the face. An image, like a hellish stumble, a tunnel of fire...” As she says this Luna, pauses, one eye half closed, a square portion of her cheek going over the edges of her face. We couldn’t find a way to meet actual face to actual face, so we’re video-calling. She lives in Lille, I live in Brussels, and she has just come back from Berlin where she played a few days ago.

When she told me she had to leave for a week, I immediately started to doubt – in both placid and prematurely pessimistic bouts – that I’d be able to talk her at all. So in the meantime, to

stave off anguish, I went on a systematic Googlian rambling. Here are my findings: The informative yet appealing paragraph employed by Lexi Disques to introduce Fiesta en el Vacío’s 7", *Brillanza y Orgullo*: “Having a rich musical background from flamenco to trap, from French punk to underground club sounds, Fiesta en el Vacío is developing a strange world of her own, dark, fragile and poetic. The present record is bathed in organ-like synth and Spanish singing, very tense on A-side (walking too fast on an empty dark street) and almost numb on the B-side (lost in an unknown bright garden with no way out).” On other sites, it is mainly a question of “cosmic” character, of “romanticism”, of “phantoms”. *Brillanza y Orgullo* is indeed haunting, like a theatre of shadows and wistful invocations; shiny pieces of jewellery shaped like rotten fruit, hanging from a thread of disquiet; a buzzing green light in the dark and lilac waves of sound that unfurl without breaking. Luna’s music sounds like the night.

Luna María Cedrón was born in Spain in 1992. Then she and her mom moved to South of France. Then they lived in Paris for a little bit. Then in Mexico. “I know I lived in Cuba at some point too... I don’t quite remember in what order.” When she was 9, she moved back to France, to Biarritz, where she spent the rest of her childhood and most of her adolescence until her mom got itchy feet again and they moved to Argentina, before moving back to France again. Well, you get the picture.

She comes from a family of musicians. “My uncle on my father’s side has a fairly well-known tango band called Cuarteto Cedrón.” Active since the 60s, Cuarteto Cedrón released about 30 albums. In the early 70s, they played with Paco Ibáñez who invited them to tour in France. They would settle there a few years later in order to flee the dictatorship. “It was a bit of a family thing. Everyone worked for my

AYLU The young Buenos Aires-based producer Ailin Grad had been self-releasing music under the Aylu pseudonym for several years before being picked up by Orange Milk and Sun Ark Records. Her work spans genres and aesthetics, going from electrifying footwork and hallucinogenic juke to sophisticated electroacoustic compositions of mind-bending quality. To further illustrate this point, hover your futuristic talk machine over this picture and listen to the special mix she made for our humble paper soapbox. Go ahead, warp out of this reality and into this QR-assisted survey of Aylu’s lush and electrifying world.



Aylu © Larisa Zmud

uncle: my cousins were the luthier and the double bassist in the band, and my older brother played bandoneón with them too.” They’re a fairly classical band and Luna has no musical training at all, except for a particularly aloof stint with the guitar. “I was viewing all of this from afar. Music was ‘their’ thing in a way, and I never contemplated making music of my own. All I loved was sewing, anyway.”

Luckily, the biased idea of “having what it takes” was soon to crumble. “When I was in college in Lille, I was with this guy who composed and played synth, and I had friends with whom we jammed together from time to time... Gradually, music turned out to be something *possible*, something *doable*.” She bought herself a synth. Then it didn’t work. “It didn’t work for a year. It was in my room and I would just look at it.” Sometimes “what it takes” is just time.

“I started my first band a few years later with a friend when I was living in Bordeaux. It was called Stella Dactyl. Back then I didn’t sing. I had bought a Juno 106 from my neighbor but of course it didn’t work.” Sensing a sort of pattern here – ah, the synth life. “We had a drum machine, and we synchronized MIDI gear and added a lot of effects. That was basically it.” A short-lived enterprise, Stella Dactyl played approximately two shows, including one in a place called Confort Moderne in Poitiers; it was a party for the end of something, the kind of party where you have to destroy everything. “We used so much paint to tag on the walls that they blocked access to the venue before the beginning of the

show. It stank of paint so much that it was actually dangerous. We ended up playing anyway. We’d asked friends to sing but they were completely wasted and somehow managed to disconnect all the pedals. And people couldn’t hear a thing because our amps were so small. Yeah... It was disastrous.”

Meanwhile, the idea of writing lyrics and singing live, a completely abstract notion at first, started to solidify in her mind. “The summer I was 24, I had a big Flamenco phase. When I was a kid, I danced Flamenco a lot. So I watched a lot of videos, listened to a lot of music and it really, really made me want to sing. Flamenco singers are very impressive – you don’t understand what they are doing, they sound super technical and mysterious at the same time.” It was 2015 or 2016. Luna was still in Bordeaux, starting to get bored and craving to get out of the city. That’s how she landed in Brussels. However, shortly after she moved, her father fell ill and she went to Brittany to be by his side. Once there, she met up again with her nephew, Mateo, her bandoneonist older brother’s son. “Mateo is is hardly younger than I am, and he makes trap. I’ve always listened to a lot of rap so we spent most of our time talking about it and making trap beats in the hospital’s waiting room.”

In the evening, Luna and Mateo would go back to her dad’s apartment and frantically write lyrics in the midst of the fog emanating from the doobies Mateo would be chain-smoking. “I was very shy at first. He would say ‘You just listen to the sound, you listen to it, you listen to it again and again and again, and then you write, and that’s it.’ Then he would play the beat on a Bluetooth speaker, and we would train ourselves to sing our lyrics in front of the sea. It was so cool.”

Back in Brussels she kept on writing and started to play live more often. When she records, she likes to sing songs. When she plays live she really likes to rap, too. “I like spoken word. Speech becomes another melodic line with its flow, its emphasis. And, from a more pragmatic perspective, it lends itself to a live process where I never know what’s going to happen on the next bar.”

“I’ve been dreaming of playing modular synth for a while. I’m a bit repelled by the mad price of the equipment and the big ‘specialist’ aura that surrounds the modular practice... Who knows!” But that’s another story, and shall be told another time.



Fiesta en el Vacío © Pauline Marx

MESIAS MAIGUASHCA

Mesias Maiguashca (Quito, 1938) is part of the first generation of South American maverick sound explorers that in the 1960s paved the way for a tradition of innovation that persists in the present noise and psychedelic scenes of the continent. Along with Edgar Valcarcel, César Bolanos, Beatriz Ferreyra, Mauricio Kagel or José Vicente Asuar, he contributed to expanding the possibilities of musical language beyond the dominant Western canon and the rigidity of certain styles of national folklore. He will take part of the KRAAK Festival 2020 with a unique performance of his wooden sound sculptures for the composition *Holz Arbeitet II*.

DAVID JARRÍN

Like a true native of Ecuador’s capital, Quito, Mesías Maiguashca comes from a distinctive neighbourhood with its particularities and traditions: the working class, mixed race district of San Diego. A son of indigenous intellectuals that were among the first to bring the ideas of progressive education to Ecuador, he learned to play the piano from an early age. This instrument came to his family as a payment for the legal services provided by his father, a lawyer of deep liberal beliefs who wrote a book on the condition and identity of the indigenous people of the Americas. From that point on, Maiguashca started on a persistent adventure in sound. At the beginning, it consisted of a formal Western classical education provided by the local conservatory and the popular Latin American songs that came out of speakers in the buzzing streets and bars of San Diego. He likes to say that his mind would have a pavlovian response to Bach, Debussy or Chopin, as it would immediately evoke the memory of a bolero, a tango or a pasillo. He vividly remembers how these songs would effortlessly crawl from outside of his parents’ house to the room where he rehearsed some solemn romantic tune.

Promptly, Maiguashca could continue his education at the Eastman School of Music, and from there he went on to study composition in the exploratory studios of the Instituto Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires. In 1966, he came to the WDR in Cologne, directed at the time by Karlheinz Stockhausen, whose influence was determinant in his work and encouraged his sense of freedom even more. From the 1970s onwards, Maiguashca followed a very personal path in which he tackled a wide range of registers and modalities of electronic music (subtractive synthesis, FM synthesis, computer compositions, concrete music), but unlike several of his European contemporaries, his work is characterized precisely by its combinatory adventurousness which involves chamber ensembles, organs, amplified wooden and metal objects.

Maiguashca’s creative journey is punctuated by pivotal moments of discovery and the acquiring of a deep sense of creative freedom. At the Quito conservatory his teachers maintained the belief that the likes of Beethoven or Schubert form an unsurpassed milestone and virtually forbade their students to compose, unless they created works that could compare to the great classics. Maiguashca rebelled and at his graduation piano concert played one of his own compositions, uncovering inadvertently the way to his own creative endeavour. At Eastman, Maiguashca went to a series of lectures by Henry Cowell who introduced him to the work of Anton Webern and talked about the new music that the conservative American elite still frowned upon at the time. Cowell impressed him when he played one of his own pieces, “The Tiger”, which with its unorthodox playing techniques (hitting the keyboard with fists and elbows) opened in Maiguashca’s spirit the possibilities of creating music free of tonality that can include noise as its raw material. Eventually, in Cologne

his personal research would completely open with the help of the almost infinite possibilities of an electronic music studio, initiating a process of “an individual, necessary and compulsive research”.

The new possibilities of experimenting with electronics awakened in Maiguashca philosophical questions. The very physicality of sound motivated his research on acoustics as well as a growing fascination for the work of Alvin Lucier for their shared interest in sound spatialization. This period concluded in a series of pieces where space and movement helped to create tonal variations and immersive listening experiences (most notably in his *Ton Geographie* series). The deep commitment to abstraction recalls the Schopenhauerian conception of music as a reality in the absolute sense, where sound establishes its own material existence in a virtual reality. On the other hand, Maiguashca detached himself from the excesses of abstruse theorization by harboring the belief that his work is also an exercise of introspection, even asserting that all art is in a way a form of autobiography. Many of his works try to balance his personal life with an ongoing research into the nature of sound. Maiguashca’s iconic piece *Ayayayay* that evokes the streets of the San Diego district or *Oeldorf 8* (soon to be reissued by the German imprint Karlrecords on LP) come to mind as they were conceived as sonic diaries with an edge to encompass radical electronic synthesis.

In the last thirty years Maiguashca went further into his personal story and expanded it to its ties with the indigenous origins of his family and the dramatic history of Ecuador. One of his most important works is the musical reading of the poem of the avant-garde poet and mystic César Dávila Andrade, *Boletín y Elegía de las Mitas*. It is a lament honouring the indigenous victims of the colonial rule that has lasted in its various forms for more than five centuries, imposing enslaving and exhausting chores to the population in mines and fields. This grave and lyrical text is also one of the first masterpieces in sound poetry in Latin American literature. Dávila lists quichua names and places while gradually displacing Spanish from the poem’s pages, transforming it into a faint echo. The sonic effect of these words pronounced slowly one after the other has certainly appealed to Maiguashca, who read Dávila under the influence of the political civil rights essays of his father. The result of his adaptation was considered by the Ecuadorian critics as a synthesis of Maiguashca’s work. It contained a great deal of his experiments while retaining an epic quality that strongly engaged local audiences.

Mesías Maiguashca remains very active today: he is currently preparing for another live instalment of his *Canción de la tierra*, which is another hybrid epic about his homeland that combines abstract electronic music, his current research in sound sculpture, dance and video performances that will premiere in Quito and Berlin this year.

Regarding his participation at KRAAK festival, he will propose

a performance of his piece *Holz Arbeitet II* (2005, for wooden sound objects, two performers and electronics). In our exchanges in preparation for this article, Maiguashca stated: “This piece represents well many of my musical concerns. The sound source consists of rustic wooden sound objects amplified by contact microphones and played by two performers, with the help of bows and mallets. The traditional harmonic musical world consists of precise pitches, grouped in scales that allow traditional musical notation. The sound world of a ‘sound object’ is, on the contrary, a world of inharmonic sounds close to noise. A conventional notation is not possible. In this work, it is not the sounds that are heard that are noted, but rather how they are produced: it is an action notation. Musically, it is an improvisation controlled by a score. You can make as many versions of it as you wish. Normally, I have been using electronic transformations when I use sound objects, as I have not wished to ‘degrade’ the quality of the original sounds, which seem to me, as they are, fresh and interesting. However, in this work, I use



Mesias Maiguashca
© Gabriel Maiguashca

two vocoders (electronic modules with two inputs – ‘audio’ and ‘control’ – in which the spectral ‘control’ information is printed on the ‘audio’ information). The ‘control’ signal is that of the interpreters, the ‘audio’ signal is a recording (made by me around the 1980s) of religious chants in a Holy Week procession in Quito. In the beginning of the work, only the sounds of the wooden objects are heard, then the interaction of them with the recorded music, and finally only this one, controlled by the spectral information of the music made with the wooden sculptures: in a way, the pieces of wood start ‘singing’, so to speak, the religious songs.”

GAUTE GRANLI

SOME KIND OF COMPOSITION: “Norwegian wunderkind of the venerable Stavanger freakscene, GG is a one-man army of hallucinatory bombardment and altered state dramaturgy. His arsenal of guitar, voice, effects and loopers position him as the architect and protagonist of a stunningly diverse and captivating range of scenes variously concentrated with tension, psychedelia, humor, terror, pathos and fascination, like a minimalist noise opera directed by Andrei Tarkovsky, bizarre and excoriating but profoundly touching, luring you in ever closer to a serene spectacle of annihilation.” – Gretchen Aury, Guttersnipe

JOERI BRUYNINCKX

JOERI BRUYNINCKX I never saw you live, but I saw several full concerts of you on YouTube and Vimeo. The more recent the concert, the better, I think.

GAUTE GRANLI Would be sad if it went the other way around, wouldn’t it?

JB Well, yeah.

GG I always felt good about what I was doing at the time, but in retrospect I think form has definitely improved in recent years.

JB Is Gaute Granli your real name or a moniker?

GG My name is my name.

JB Right. What I enjoy about your music is that it’s wild and noisy, but at the same time it’s also structured.

GG I don’t think I make a distinction between what you refer to as wild and noisy versus structure. I’ve never thought that what I’m doing is free

improv in any sense. What I always want to achieve is some kind of composition or a song. Performing live for me will usually take on a looser as well as more performative and improvisational form, which just seems perfectly natural.

JB Do you make a difference between what you do live and what you do on a record?

GG When making an album I’ll always go for straight up songs.

JB In our previous talks, I compared your music to Arto Lindsay, Mars and Jandek.

GG I’ve listened to DNA in the meantime as well as to Mars and Jandek, but I would not consider any of them major influences. Although I find it hard to hear Jandek without being affected, whether you like it or not. One of my top influences this year has been the song “212” by Azealia Banks, which I heard for the first time this summer. I realize it’s been around for a while. Also Skip Spence and Michael Yonkers have been key this year.

JB I could also have said Mosquitoes or Guttersnipe.

GG Don’t know Mosquitoes but Guttersnipe are good friends. We did a few shows together in the UK this year. They’re great! But I’m not sure I see the resemblance.

JB Are you part of a Stavanger scene?

GG Stavanger has some really good music people in it and I really like it here. A good chunk of recent Stavanger music can be found on the Drid Machine Records label, one of the few DIY labels in town which is run by Kjetil Brandsdal of Noxagt and Ultralyd.



Gaute Granli © Vaidotas Žukauskis

GUILHEM ALL

A CORRESPONDENCE
WITH AMBER MEULENJZER

Dear Guilhem,

14/01/2020

I am writing to you from Brussels. Today was a rather messy day, a lot of plans made in the morning, none of them came to be during the day. Now, approaching the end of the afternoon, I have put some brownies in the oven. This sweet smell, combined with the slightly stinging feeling of cold feet, seem for me the perfect sensory environment to write down some thoughts to you.

A great deal of many many things can be said about sound textures, I mostly like to get lost in it. I think the first time I experienced melodic qualities in something that could be considered noise, was when I was about 5 years old, being stuck in a Centroparc's toilet and hypnotised by the ventilation system (also watching it very closely as I thought it would probably be my only way to ever see the outside again). But how do you feel about sampling, evoking patterns and images? I always like to start from a point in one's own visual vocabulary and then let the mind wander around it's own ^{land} soundscape. How important are these visual references for you? Or are they not visual at all?

Performing your soundscapes, do you like depending on your machines? I mean, do you like to have control over them or do you gladly embrace they sometimes make their own life choices? And along with this question I was also wondering how important chaos is to you? I am asking you this because I do believe every coincidental sound or moment of silence can be ^{PART} of a new starting point for a circular process, defying the essence of time and endlessness - can endlessness be interpreted in other than circularly? I'm sure we could have a very cool discussion about this with Borgeon if he could write back to us, but I think I mostly would like to think of endlessness as something ^{STRETCHED} like a long road beginning in fog and ending in fog. This way going forward or backward wouldn't matter so much and you could still stop at a gas station along the way to buy something like Fanta or Frutella's.

At this point, I promised myself to leave you at the border of the page. I will have to leave you at this point, I promised myself to respect the border of the page.

Hi Amber! My first sound experience I can remember was bewitching and soothing. I was still a child. When agricultural machinery were reaping all the night long... Vrrrrrrrr... far away in the fields and sometimes was getting closer to the house. It was like if some ~~body~~ people out door was keeping at night, occupied to fill it.

I was around seven I guess, I was already subject to insomnies. Insomnies evocate me a close relationship with endlessness because you never know when sleep will come and if it ~~can~~ will come at a time.

Also, all the nights I used to wait the 11:07 PM train which runned in the deep of the valley before to be relaxed.

For sure each recording answer to a moment, a concrete picture. So, the report to picture predominates in my practice. Sounds make some mental pictures. In parallel the performing I propose is basically an object handling and in that, the live can also be feel by the eyes. It's the reason I can't play on stage, I need to feel the audience around me.

I've never done engrave endless loop on my own noises records I use. I create loops with pieces of cardboard, a system which slide on the disk to find the good furrow. But mostly time vinyl chooses his own loops on the loops themselves choose to appear (cause of the usury).

Hazard ~~play~~ works for a lot. It creates a surprise effect. I try, but I can't control all. For exemple, one time, after I finished the sound checks, I leave my stuff alone for 5 min and when I came back something has delivery a pizza!!! Crazy, isn't it?

GUILHEM ALL 2020

VOORUIT

MUSIC

wed 04.03	KRANKLAND 'Project Z' with JOHANNES VERSCHAEVE / COLIN H. VAN ECKHOUT (CHVE) / JAN SWERTS & ILLUMININE / BLACK FUEL ENSEMBLE & NAOMI SIJMONS / THE WILD CLASSICAL MUSIC ENSEMBLE / THE OSTEND STREET ORKESTRA A tribute to (un)loved music by exceptional artists electronica
sat 21.03	OUT THE FRAME HOMEBY SANDMAN / TRISTAN / MISS ANGEL / MC YALLAH & DEBMASTER / ROEDEL / KRANKK / LUNCH MONEY LIFE / LAIMA / PELADA + more tbc Explore the unfolding universe of hip hop! hip hop / electronica / nightlife
wed 01.04	JUANA MOLINA Experimental popfairy goes punk experimental / punk
thu 02.04	KALI MALONE / LIS RHODES Minimalist organ drones experimental / avant-garde
thu 16.04	PALESTINE, AMBARCHI & THIELEMANS / KA BAIRD + more tbc New trio of avant-garde giants bring tribute to Mika Vainio experimental / avant-garde / minimal
wed 15.05	ANDY STOTT Mutated pop, cracked house & murky grime electronica
sat 30.05	YVES TUMOR The Jekyll and Hyde of dark, visceral electronics experimental

info & tickets

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"RADIOACTIVE SPARROW"

In a world where the worse is always better, Maarten Raskin of Crash Toto and Lemones gets to bump virtual heads with Will Edmondés, the acting ambassador of Radioactive Sparrow. Having met at KRAAK Fest 2016 when Maarten played with Shetahr and Will with his daughter Freya as Yeah You!, they eventually became friends through repeated connections within mutual circles. Together, they delve into the strange, sprawling cosmology of the most legendary band that nobody's ever seen — an odyssey wherein total improvisation is the sole prescription.

MAARTEN RASKIN

WILL EDMONDES Sooo... What have you got? You have some good questions?

MAARTEN RASKIN Yeah. I dug into your Radioactive Sparrow world and I had a really good time with it. It's a really nice universe you guys created.

WE Oh jeez, well it's been a long time – it will be our 40th anniversary this year. This band started when I was 13.

MR Wow, crazy.

WE Yeah, it's a good time to do this. I've been planning to do stuff with Steve [Heaving Stews] and re-inventing the whole thing because we haven't played for a couple of years. Tony won't be able to make the KRAAK fest gig, which is a shame but we've played without him before. He's still making a backing tape for us – he kind of imagined the gig and he will be controlling things to a certain extent.

MR But you guys don't know what's on it?

WE No, it will be a total surprise.

MR Wow, amazing. Yeah, I downloaded the album *Spacelord* some years ago. And later I bumped into a live video of Guttersnipe on your account and saw some Radioactive Sparrow videos. I asked Pauwel if he knew the band, but he'd never heard it before and liked it a lot. We didn't know if the band was still active, and then Pauwel discovered that you play in the band as well! But it was confusing since we saw that the last videos were from 2016 or something and then it somehow stopped.

WE Yeah, it's complicated. Steve and I were in it from the beginning, and there was also third guy, Bruce, up until 1989. Tony [Gage] and Richard [Bowers] were in one of my favorite bands when we were in school. At some point it seemed like Bruce would leave, so we nervously asked Tony if he would play with us and he said yes. That was it. It's pretty much been me, Tony and Steve, with Rich coming occasionally when we started gigging a lot in the early 90s; sometimes he'd play a gig one night, and the next night he'd say, "Nah, I'm gonna stay home and watch TV." Steve has no conventional music skills – he plays totally instinctively and that's always fun. But I do need to have somebody in the group that I can connect with intuitively, and that's Rich. I figured that without Tony it would also be good if we still had somebody who can do his kind of thing. I've known Otto for a few years now, but I saw Historically Fucked at Tusk last year and it was *so* Radioactive Sparrow, kind of like our album *Rockin' On The Portoman*. But we *have* to have Steve: he is the most unique thing about the band, and that's entirely why I wanted to get things moving again because he doesn't do music outside of this band. The way that Bobby and Gretchen [from Guttersnipe] sing is similar to Steve's style and I feel Steve's time has finally come. Like, when we played in the 80s, fans would come after the gig like, "Yeah, great show, but that guy's just going too far." Nothing like him had ever happened yet.

MR Respect, man, respect. So for KRAAK fest it will be you, Richard Bowers, Otto Willberg and Heaving Stews. You live in Newcastle now, right? And they still live in Wales?

WE Well, we're all either from Wales or have lived there at a certain point. Steve and I went to school together but were never really were friends until maybe the last two years of school. He was the only guy that was into any music that was a bit different. At the time he was obsessed with Syd Barrett and he didn't know anybody else that was into it or knew the first Pink Floyd records – except for me, and that was our connection. We got into music together, like The Fall and Half Japanese, and we were the only kids listening to John Peel and stuff like that. Rich still lives in Wales, Steve's now in London, Tony lives in Glasgow, and I moved to Newcastle about 15 years ago. It's kind of difficult to get together, which is why we haven't done much in the last few years, also because I was busy with Yeah You! and all.

MR You said that the band felt more like a hobby at first, so your approach was more about being together and being in the moment and not, like, let's get this riff right, let's get this sound right, and let's make this song all radio-ready.

WE Yeah, there was very little of that. It was a kind of social thing, certainly in our teens. We'd make tape releases and sell them or give them away. It was only when we were like 22 or 23 that we started gigging a lot, though not being too serious because we sought to completely subvert the idea of a proper band. Maybe towards the end of that period there were tensions in the band because someone or other might have wanted to get a bit more serious, but it never did in the end so... While it was definitely a hobby in our teens, it became something that we were serious about for ourselves and not in a conventional sense. There was definitely a desire to not exactly piss audiences off but to deconstruct the idea of what aband is meant to be. Some people have written in the past that we have an open door policy for members, but it was never like that, either. People would arrive in our lives and then just start playing. My son, for instance, was in one of our studio sessions when he was 9, and he wanted to play, and that was it. As it turns out, his guitar playing is utterly insane. There's an energy in it that no adult can play.

MR You guys had your own label also? How many releases do you have in total, like 90?

WE Well, 92. We tried two different labels. The first one was Unsound Automatic and made about 50 releases with that before we gave up. Kakutopia was the second attempt. Most were short runs on cassette or CD, and some of them may not come back in digital form but we haven't decided yet. One of the problems with it being kind of a hobby atmosphere in our teens is that a lot of the lyrical content has a sort of childish sexiness which doesn't sound right anymore. I'm still gonna post the first album from 1980 on Bandcamp, which was really raw heavy rock but with an 11-year-old singer who was what you'd call tone-deaf. He couldn't really sing, so...

MR Nice.

WE And we had to fire him after a year.

MR Because he began singing really well?

WE No, in 1981 we briefly had a spell where we tried to become a real band



Radioactive Sparrow © Will Edmondés

because Bruce's older brother played gigs for, like, 1000 people, and Bruce wanted us to be like that. But I was never interested in learning real songs. We tried learning "Message In A Bottle" by The Police and I got bored of playing the riff over and over, and Bruce got fed up by the whole thing and was like, "Ah, fuck it, let's keep with what we were doing." That's why we'd fired the original singer and a year after that we realized he was brilliant. We offered him 10 pence a week to rejoin, but by then he was actually embarrassed about having being involved with us – he was like, "Keep away from me, guys." "Message In a Bottle" was never recorded, either.

MR Maybe it's for the best. You could have had a lawsuit going on. Ruined and totally fucked by Sting.

WE Yeah, exactly. Jesus.

MR "Kakutopia" it has a definition: "A world real or imaginary in which everything is bad as it can possibly be." Is that kind of the idea?

WE Yeah, one of our mottos was always "the worse, the better." And I still believe it, that trying to make things in a conventionally good way actually makes things worse. We always used to call our style "Kakaphonic rock" so it was "Kak" for short.

"FUJI Sometime in 2018 – can't remember when exactly, but I know it was cold – I went to Barlok for what would end up being one of my last visits to that legendary berth of decadence. The bill included the revered Japanese guitarist Junzo Suzuki and a mysterious outfit named Fuji. I surmised from the scant Facebook event info that some folks I knew played in it, that they were touring around several cornerstone DIY venues in Belgium, and that was about it. In the end, it was best for me to know as little as possible about what would end up being one of my favorite shows that year. The cosmic encounter of Warre Fungus, Bart Sloow, Louis Freres, Mik Quantius (!) and Suzuki himself (!!) swept us few lucky souls that found ourselves there that night up into blissfully raw spaced-out jam territory. Free-flowing kraut meets offbeat jazz interludes, building up to an overdrive of energy and sick grooves not unlike Psychedelic Speed Freaks and their ilk.



GABRIELA GONZALEZ RONDON

GABRIELA GONZALEZ RONDON How did you guys get together originally?

WARRE FUNGUS Well, Bart (guitar) and I (drums) liked to jam with each other in previous bands such as Jüfro (with Ernesto Gonzalez and Tomas Dittborn) and some other improvisational one-night-stand bands. After a while we added a bass player in a new pact. That was Simon Beeckaert at first, and then it was Louis Frères. That's Fuji.

GGR It's my understanding that Junzo and Mik are in reality guests of Fuji. How did this collusion of underground veterans come to be?

WF I asked Bart to ask Mik Quantius if he was interested in joining a tour of Fuji, and so after Bart mailed Mik a recording of ours he said yes. It was

MR I also really like this picture where you are all in Provence or something.

WE Yeah, it was the only time that we ever went abroad and played some gigs – oh shit, I think it was on Christmas day, even. It was me and Tony and Steve, and that trip ended with a head-on collision with a van, which sort of put an end to that period because everyone was a bit depressed afterwards. We were playing a lot and drinking a lot, and we took the overnight boat and got lost and then we had the crash. It was 1990, the end of the decade, and it just felt like a shock to the system.

MR Yeah, I sometimes have it after going on tour, when you're back after all the drinking and partying and playing gigs and driving: it's a surreal life that you can't maintain forever. There are dense moments and really strange memories being squeezed together and you can get sort of depressed after period like that.

WE Yeah, and in that particular case we also lost the van. We had this beautiful old van, but it just couldn't be repaired after the accident. But we recorded a lot on that trip, namely the album *I'll Never Fall In Love Again*. There's a lot of guests on there, including an American banjo player. I heard he gave up playing – no future in avant-garde banjo playing, basically.

MR Banjo is tricky.

WE It's a good instrument, though.

MR I think that Mumford And Sons totally fucked the banjo for me. But luckily it's not 2009 anymore. Maybe I just have to get over that trauma.

WE Yeah, fuck them. Jesus.

■ **MARIA VIOLENZA** Scirocco is a hot dust-laden wind blowing from the Sahara deserts towards the Northern Mediterranean coast and beyond. When raging over the Mediterranean Sea, it picks up moisture which causes a rainfall in the southern part of Italy known locally as “blood rain” due to the red sand mixed with the falling rain. The sand and dust can travel as far as Belgium and The Netherlands — next time you wipe that thin layer of dirt from your bike’s saddle on a smoggy afternoon, think of the camel that didn’t bite the dust. *Scirocco* is also the excellent debut album from Rome-based artist Maria Violenza that came out in 2018 on the Swiss label Kakakids Records. Originating from Palermo, the heart of the Sicilian Inquisition, Christina Cusimano (her real name) is blowing her cold waves of Arab-influenced synthpunk into the Northern parts of the European continent. She sings in Italian, French, English and Sicilian with a raspy voice, mixing folk riffs with repetitive rhythms that she builds up with a looper. Haunted by Sicilian ghosts and the whisperings of the “donas de fuera”, this lady of the underground for sure didn’t bite the dust.

INGE VAN DEN KROONENBERG

INGE VAN DEN KROONENBERG You grew up in Palermo in the '90s. Where did you hang out, what music did you listen to, and which haircut did you have?

CRISTINA CUSIMANO More punk, rock n’ roll, hardcore and garage than now. A lot of jazz like now. The only time I cut my hair it was the time on the cover of *Scirocco*, and after that it’s always been long hair.

IVK The history of Sicily is one of many conquests by other nations who left their ethnic traces on the island, causing a unique

climate for art, music, literature and religious traditions to blend into a rich culture. How does that resonate through your music and songs?

cc Culture is the acceptance and knowledge of different things and finding a good way to use them. That’s what I do with my music.

IVK Who is “Il Palermitano”? (song 3 on the B-side of *Scirocco*)

cc Anyone, ah, every Palermitano. Madness and sympathy live in harmony in the same heads!

GGR On the subject of guests: when I saw you guys at Barlok in 2018 Bram Borloo (from R.O.T) was also playing. Do you guys seek a specific dynamic through your invitation of guests or is it more of a “see what happens” kind of approach? Any other people you’d like to invite onstage or in the studio?

WF I guess it’s more a “see what happens” spirit on my behalf. I can make up a list of a lot of artists that would be nice to see them adding some juice at a performance from Fuji. How the rest of the band feels is a matter of who/what/when and the quantity of it in each segment. If it feels alright, then just do it. One of the artists I would have loved bringing into Fuji would’ve been Charlie Nothing (if he was still alive ~ RIP), but also Eva Van Deuren, Laurent Cartuyvels, Asa Irons, Ernesto Gonzalez, Siet Rae, Tomas Dittborn, ...
MQ It’s so shit that Barlok is closed, that place was so good for music!
JS So sad about it. Actually just the day before my gig was booked, too!

GGR What are the starting points of your jams? Is it full-blown improvisations or are there definite cues you all follow?

WF There are no cues at all, it’s just start and stop. I don’t even know what I will be doing until it starts. There is also no communication between us about who plays what or anything of the sort. Everyone does his/her thing and we see each other in the end somewhere. I am just transmitting and processing what comes running through me and trying not to lose my drumsticks.
MQ Being in the moment with the ear.

GGR We seem to be at a point where psych/jam bands are becoming



Fuji © Els Van Daele

IVK In “Sbirri Reprise” you’re furiously ranting, spitting out lyrics in an almost hip hop-like style. What’s this song about and how does it relate to the political climate in Italy at the moment?

cc This song is about Stefano, a boy killed by the Italian police in a police station in Rome. Who wouldn’t be furious about it? I really don’t want to speak about the political climate in Italy. It makes me want to puke and cry at the same time.

IVK During your performances you build up your songs with a looper, shifting between different instruments. How did you develop this way of playing?

cc The set up has grown up with me according to my needs and the possibilities that my sets have given me.

IVK Sometimes you start over again when a loop is out of sync. Do you always restart or do you sometimes choose to improvise with the spontaneous “errors” that happen?

cc I just evaluate whether the error is manageable or not, and that it won’t give me too much trouble to finish the song. If it does, I restart.

IVK You’re part of the documentary *Linfa*, written and directed by Carlotta Cerquetti, about the female underground scene in the eastern outskirts of Rome. How did you end up in the movie?

cc Someone talked to Carlotta about me and she wrote me an email asking me if I was interested in being a part of her project. She wanted to show independent women in the world of music with a non-canonical life.

a sort of rarity in a hyper digitalized world, at least in the European “underground”. What makes you want to continue playing this kind of music? What kind of energy do you get from it?

WF It only comes out in recordings ‘cause we happen to record our shows and hopefully can release them on vinyl. You get a nice energy to perform as a band and have no strings attached of what you wanna do with your instrument/stuff. It sets you free.
MQ I like to live it and its healthiness!
BS Life is analog, people have been doing this since prehistoric times. Helps to keep me sane.
JS Seems that we don’t fit into this kind of MODERN WORLD.

GGR At the moment, there’s not a whole lot to listen to by Fuji. Any releases in the pipeline? If so, how is the experience of recording different from playing live in this instance?

MQ I would love a Barlok uncut release.
WF Well, we have still a 2018 *Live at Barlok* recording that is waiting to be released with Mik and Junzo. About recording itself, it’s a bit like Les Rallizes Dénudés where not much was recorded in studios or at home; most of their recordings are from live shows. I am personally a fan of that. We also all have pretty fully booked agendas and long distance flights that makes the logistics of it pretty intense.
BS Since we don’t work with overdubs and all it doesn’t really matter if it’s live recorded or in the studio.
JS I love to work with overdubs normally, but thought the best shape for this recording will be released just as it is. Will see the light for the festival.



Maria Violenza © Sarah Lenormand

IVK The last song on *Scirocco* is a version of the beautiful and melancholic “Quanno Moru” from Italian singer and musician Rosa Balistreri (Sicily 1927–1990). Can you tell me a bit about this song? What does it mean to you?

cc People die but a song lives forever. It’s a way to hand down a feeling, a thought, an ideology, a way of life. This song is really powerful in that regard.

IVK Last but not least: if you would have been born during the Sicilian Inquisition, would you have been a heretic? If so, which song would you sing to avenge your own demise?

cc For sure they would have burned me at the stake like a witch while I was singing “XI COMANDAMENTO”.

GGR What happens after KRAAK Fest for you all? Siesta, road trip, other projects and adventures?

MQ I will release now 50 tapes on famousnbroke, go on a Japanese tour with Junzo and his friend in April, and also during July with Lori Goldston in Europe.
JS Yes, me and Mitsuru Tabata (ex Zeni Geva/Acid Mother’s Temple) will do a coast to coast tour of Japan (18 shows!) as 20 Guilders along with Mik in April. And 20 Guilders will be touring Australia in late August as well as Europe in November to promote our new album. My other unit called Miminokoto will release a new LP/ Cassette, and a new duo LP with Tetuzi Akiyama will be released around this summer. And of course, my solo albums are ready.
BS Working on some new LPs that hopefully will see the light of day later this year: solo, Ilta Hämärä, Wendingen 1918, Innercity, Bombay Lunatic Ensemble, and so forth.
WF If all goes well, Fuji will play a few more shows around Belgium. I have some other projects like High Musth, which is also an improvisational band that only plays under a rising full moon. Also a noise project called Long Time No Sea where I swim into a crate of metal junk. I also run De Audio Plant in Antwerp where once in a while I set up some shows and try to record them. And tons of other things. By the way, the recording of Jüfro is also still waiting to be released from the Echnum era! Life is very versatile and you never know where we’ll be running tomorrow. All is temporary and so are we. Anyway, it would be Amay-O-Naizing to see everybody back at KRAAK festival this year. It seems the lineup is pretty noise.

■

YÜRGEN KARLE TRIO

THE WORLD IN A SCHACHTEL

■

HOLGER ADAM

What is the Yürgen Karle Trio? Well, it's not a trio (anymore) and it's far more than a band, too. The various musicians performing (not only) under this moniker are long-time Stuttgart scenesters and, therefore, I have to go back in time and widen the context a little.

To begin with, I first read about a band called Rocket Freudental at the end of the 1990s when they were mentioned in the German music magazine SPEX for sounding similar to the legendary American garage blues punk duo Doo Rag. Back then I was knee-deep into all that trash-punky stuff released by labels like Crypt, Goner or In The Red Records and was surprised to find out about a German band being rated as good as the insane duo from Tucson, Arizona. But, since it was the pre-internet days I didn't manage to get a copy of whatever record it was that Rocket Freudental had released back then.

I forgot about it until nearly a decade later, when I first got to know about a vibrant scene of musicians at the Nordbahnhof in Stuttgart that was back then centered around a concert venue called Wagon. The Wagon is gone now: a container-venue called Alte Schachtel replaced it and expanded into a larger container-version fittingly dubbed Neue Schachtel, which since a few years now operates as a cultural hub for an international underground scene that is traveling through and playing shows while on tour. Similar to Brussels' Les Ateliers Claus, Amsterdam's OCCII, Antwerp's Het Bos or London's Café Oto, the Neue Schachtel is a hot spot for a music scene that leaves behind limits of genre or any other dull attempt of categorization to make exciting things like the bi-annual Troglobatem Festival happen. Another band closely associated with the venue and its surrounding scene is the long-running musical collective Metabolismus, a more or less well-known bunch of freaks that re-organize their idea of what's (not) music since the mid-1980s. Their musical palette ranges from folky weirdo-pop to hilarious electronic free improvisations on self-built synthesizers and other more or less commonly known instruments. And another more recent project from that creative nucleus is Mosquito Ego, a free-ranging psychedelic punk outfit.

But what the heck does my name-dropping 'n myth-making ramblings have to do with Yürgen Karle Trio? Well, Yürgen Karle consists of members from Rocket Freudental, Metabolismus and Mosquito Ego, but – apart from not being a trio anyway – the Yürgen Karle Trio is far more than the sum of its parts. To get a vague idea across of what kind of band you are about to witness at this year's edition of the KRAAK Festival, I'm trying to express here how entertaining and instructive it is to enter this special circle of local heads and single-minded talented weirdos. Their knowledge of music and other cultural phenomena seems boundless, their humor is invigorating, the all-around atmosphere is relaxed, and interpersonal encounters are friendly. Of course, that may be the same with every avid underground scene from Antwerp to Portland or whatever hip city you may think of, but – first off – is it? And, secondly: this is Stuttgart, home of the Käsespätzle (routinely served at the Neue Schachtel to – non-vegan – touring artists) and the Second Hand Records shop (another fixed-star and an important source of knowledge – i.e. obscure records – in this micro-universe). I have no idea what constellation the stars were in when all these crazy cats slipped out of their mother's wombs, but altogether

they're a local treasure and of importance to many beyond the city's limits.

I say it again: Day in, day out, international artists well-known not only to the KRAAK universe play the Neue Schachtel, countless local acts cut their teeth on its stage or return for annual events (like crust punk stalwarts Cluster Bomb Unit, for example), and, in general, the place serves as a haven for anyone thirsty for unique and adventurous musical experiences. Meanwhile, a few kilometers out of town, in a small village called Degenfeld, some of the guys are running Sumsilobatem Studio. You wouldn't expect the likes of Eugene Chadbourne or Samara Lubelski to be regulars in a sleepy Swabian village, but not only do they record there, they also stay to enjoy the beautiful rural environment and the exquisite in-house record collection. Believe me, I've been there, the place is insane!

So, what I am repeatedly trying to point out since you, dear reader, had the nerve to start reading my meandering words, is that an encounter with the infamous Yürgen Karle Trio means more than meets the eye: it will be a multi-dimensional, mind-boggling, synesthetic experience of not just music but a way of life! Of course, Yürgen's free-form improvisations on mostly self-built instruments are reminiscent of household names like The Nihilist Spasm Band, Caroliner Rainbow, Anima Sound or the Sun Ra Arkestra at its most deranged, but dropping names doesn't come close to what is really happening when bands like Yürgen Karle Trio (or one of the beforehand mentioned big shots) enter the stage. The music's just one part of a much wider picture and the musicians, the human beings themselves are the living – and stubborn – proof to a life (at least more than part-time) and its possibilities beyond society's domestic expectations and aside from the dull cultural norms blindfolding our sight whenever we're switching on the tube or tune into the endless distractions the internet keeps in store. So, I highly recommend not to just gather in front of the stage when André Möhl, Robert Steng, Moritz Finkbeiner, Thilo Kuhn, Werner Nötzel, Björn Luchterhand and Dietmar Köhle perform on tin cans, buckets or beaten-up suitcases and self-built instruments with strange names like the Saxosause or the Müllulele (a waste-bin ukulele), I hereby encourage each and every one to approach the Yürgen Karle Trio off stage to share a beer or a spliff and get in touch about what's up and what's next – like we all do at KRAAK Festival. Share the communal experience of love for exceptional music and other not-so-common cultural goods.



Yürgen Karle Trio © Lisa Biedlingmaier

PANTAYO

I-JAHBAR & BOKEH EDWARDS

PETRONN SPHENE

MOTHER & NOVA SCOTIA

LETITIA PLEIADES

MC YALLAH & DEBMASTER

BAMYA

CATHERINE LAMB & JOHNNY CHANG

MOUNTAIN/FULL EDITION

JAMAICA!!

SOSENA GEBRE EYESUS

COMFORT

GABBER MODUS OPERANDI

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AND MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED...



ZAD KOKAR

There are few joyful occurrences one can blindly count on in this overflowing cesspool of a world, but one of them is that KRAAK Festival always comes around on the first weekend of March. But even that's questionable, because it's still February. No matter, it's time for our reliable gathering of heads, freaks, geeks, and nerd burgers, but also normies, basics, and whatever you wanna call yourself in your daily slog. Labels notwithstanding, it's the congregation for anyone who ever felt compelled to sit around together watching and listening, waiting for sights and sounds unseen and unheard – or, at the very least, a blissed-out drunken frolic to the tune of a really good time.

So here we go once more, piercing the heart of Brussels and all its wonders and terrors: for two nights, we'll be part of them. On Friday, meet the latest additions to the KRAAK label tribe, mostly brilliant loners who are all masters of a special kind of chaos. And Saturday, well, Saturday is always the soul of this festival, the day-long hang (not 24 hours this time, sorry), where we'll be weaving in and out of spaces, running into many faces, a lot of them old and a surprising amount of new, all seeking (always seeking) and knowing that somewhere there will be a sound and a moment that will put this year in its own category, shelved into the collective imagination that commemorates all the previous ones before it and the many more to come.

To the first of a brave new decade, The Sludge Head Consortium



Fri. 28

[illegible]

GOUDEN ZAAL = GZ

A A A

15:00	Fiesta en el Vacío	C
15:45	Quanta Qualia	GZ
16:30	Gaute Granli	GZ
17:15	Maria Violenza	GZ
18:15	Jürgen Karle Trio	C
19:00	BREAK BREAK BREAK	BREAK
20:00	Fuji	C
21:00	Mesías Maihuashca	GZ
21:30	Aylu	GZ
22:30	Radioactive Sparrow	GZ
23:30	Guilhem All	GZ
00:30	DJ Werner	C

sat. 29

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