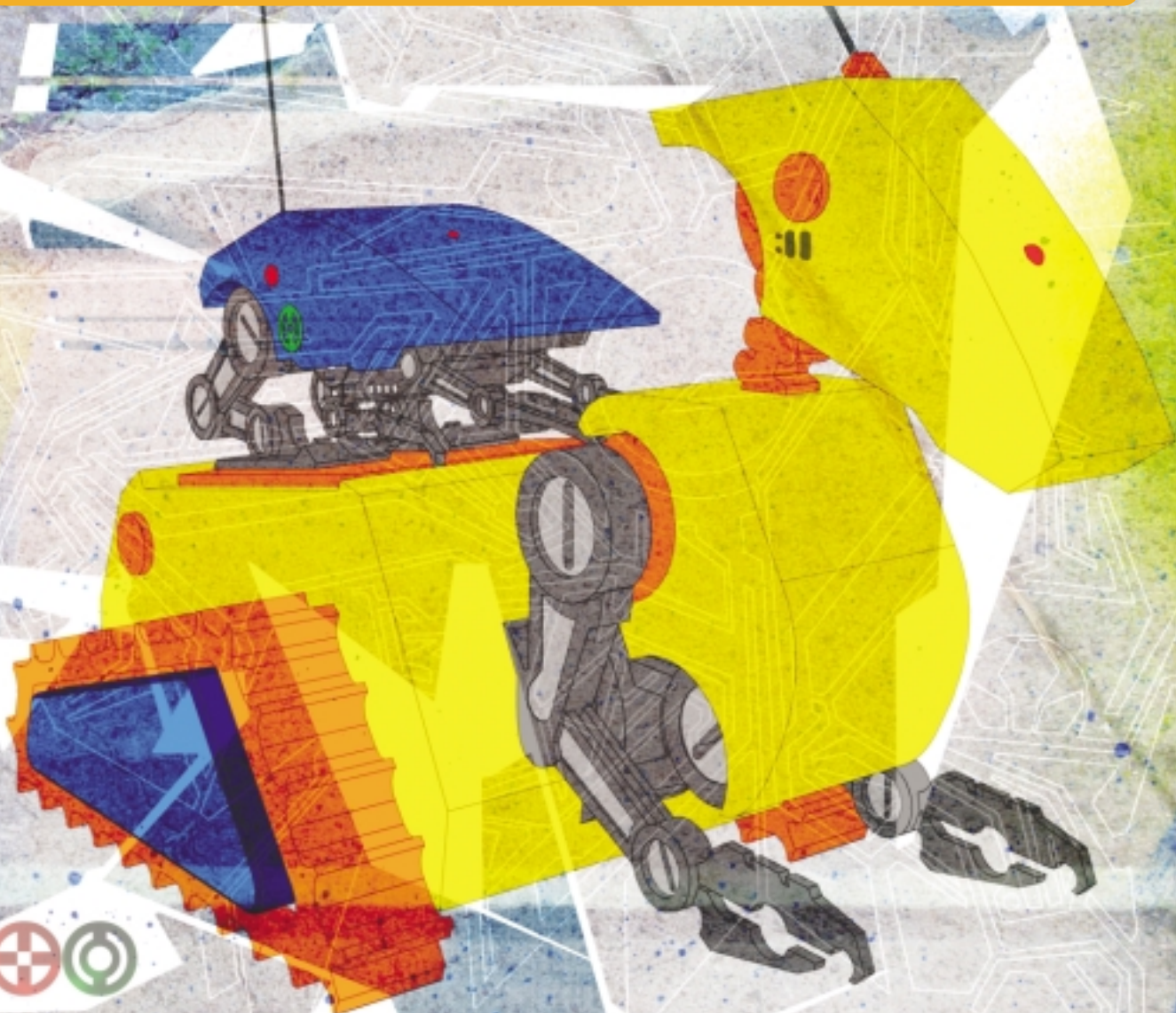


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issue one, august/september 2002





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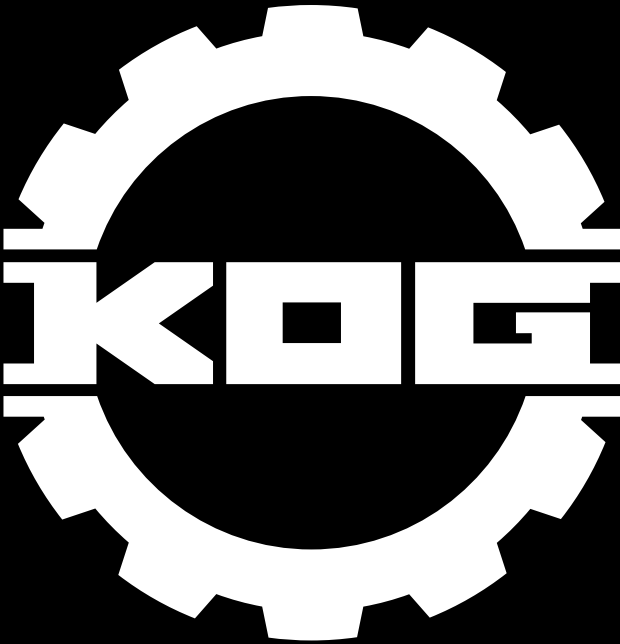
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CYCLIC DEFROST

good music, proper culture, real history ***

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In the last few years the music scene around here has been dying. The venue crisis that began with rising property prices and the development bonanza leading up to the Olympics has forced Sydney into a black hole of house djs, glamorous vacuousness, and the marginalisation of anything left-of-centre. For young people trying to find out about new music the options are few and far between. A few listen to community radio stations to get an ear on the new sounds, and many others still try to distinguish between the adverts and the music content in what is left of the music press. As for finding out about the people making music in their bedrooms in your street, forget it.

For us, being into music means tracing back musical trees. Finding all the records produced by a certain producer; the band that they used to be in; the track that is sampled in this one. Yes, it's a pretty rockist way of thinking for a certainly un-rockist age. And in a world of too much music it's getting increasingly hard to do this. The internet was supposed to be an infinite resource, yet if you don't know what you're looking for it is next to useless.

Electronic music is especially slippery. There is just so much of it. And so much crap. And so much hype. Maybe the best record of a genre was one that only 250 copies were ever made of. And yet it may never have been reviewed in a magazine and thus never stocked by the shops and it's still sitting under a bed in some nondescript suburb.

It worries me that there may not any longer be an easy way for people to find out about new music. Sure, there are plenty of parties going on purporting to play earth-shattering new sounds, and, yes, there are the real new music festivals like the fantastic What Is Music, Electrofringe, Liquid Architecture and our own Sound Summit, but what about for the rest of the year? How does the 18 year-old kid that goes to big parties because 'their friends do' ever find out about good music? Or discover that the 'history of breaks' might be more than just the name of a party?

Maybe we're just getting old. But getting old has its perks.

Last year we decided to put in a grant application to the Australia Council to see if they would fund the publication of a music magazine closely tied to


Frigid. The New Audiences programme assessed our application and we were successful. Although this nowhere near covers the full costs of the magazine we figure that its a fantastic opportunity to publish a magazine that doesn't have to rely solely on advertising or party promotion to hit the streets. And we're guaranteed to be around for at least six issues. It's an opportunity for us to make an attempt at resuscitating electronic music so there are more events going on that don't just involve bad DJs playing bad music. And, most of all, its an opportunity to build a strong network of people who care about music and music cultures.

This first issue is our first timid step into the water. There's a lot of words about local producers and labels you may only have heard of in passing; some stories on music from overseas you may like; some humour; some reviews; and the first in a series of guest covers by designers who are also working with sound and music. And it doesn't end with the magazine you have in your grubby hands either. No, get to an web browser and go online and read extended 12" versions of some of the articles, some web-only articles we couldn't fit in the magazine, and listen to music by the artists you haven't heard of!

We hope you like it.

Sebastian Chan & Dale Harrison Editors

A New Audiences project, assisted by the Australia Council, the Federal Government's art funding and advisory body, through its Audience and Market Development Division.



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Additional reviews

Exclusive Broken Beat feature (online only)

Exclusive on-line tour diaries from thug & clue to kalo

Exclusive online giveaways



Cover Design

Interview with Tom Phillipson
by Angela Stengel

ROBOT LOVE



Tom Phillipson was a creative boy long before he designed the cover for this issue of *Cyclic Defrost*. “I guess it really all started because my Grandma used to paint flowers on porcelain plates,” he muses. “I never really did learn how to draw flowers, but she did teach me how to draw. From there I always tried to be creative.”

Tom is a graphic designer, a radio presenter and an electronic musician as well as being a founding member of the DumpHuck collective. He stresses that DumpHuck is not a record label even though music is a big part of it. He sees it as a group of designers that are not out there to brand the world with a DumpHuck logo, but to push the DumpHuck way of doing things. His designs can be seen on DumpHuck album covers, his voice heard on 2SER radio and his music heard on both.

One of DumpHuck’s major projects has been the release of four compilation CDs entitled *Beat & Squelch*. These albums are brimming with Australian electronic artists who have donated their tracks to the compilation, with profits going to Amnesty International. “It was around the time of Freedom so we thought we should do something to raise funds. We just thought ‘Yeah, let’s do it for Amnesty because they’re good kids.’” A broad range of artists have featured on past compilations, including Quark Kent, Tim Koch, Superscience, Telemetry Orchestra and Purdy. “With *Beat & Squelch* we’ve always wanted to allow artists who haven’t been over-released or over-exposed to get

out there without having to sell out and sell their soul to do it. They can have exposure without having to compromise what they do.”

Tom is currently working on DumpHuck’s latest release which is an Alphatown live cut-up CD recorded at Frigid. “The learning process hasn’t stopped, but we know enough to be able to do everything without really making a mistake. We’re not saying that mistakes don’t happen because we actually like the mistakes. We try to endeavour to have a mistake on every product. At first it was just spelling mistakes because we’re all appalling spellers. There has always been a defect in the product in some way – generally speaking. We try not to make them too big – we hide them. We don’t actually put them in intentionally but we don’t look too carefully either.”

Despite seeming like a creative-project-producing machine, Tom admits to being bad with deadlines and creating things on demand. “If someone can give me a project just by saying ‘XYZ’ then I can create ‘XYZ’. But if they say ‘pick a letter’, I don’t have an idea what they’re talking about. Creatively everything I know has just been stuff I’ve learnt myself and it’s partly the reason for it.” When he was asked to design a cover image he felt it was the perfect opportunity to pull out a recent creation that was without a home. “I had a brand new robot and nothing to do with it – so that’s how the robot came to be on the cover,” he said. He may make it sound easy, but he also notes that the ideas usually have to be further worked through with whoever is soliciting the project.

His obsession with robots started with *Astroboy*. “I would watch it religiously every day when I was a little kid, then we got a video recorder back in the early ‘80s and it meant I could record them. So I did. Then I watched them over and over and over. From that I started watching other mechanical stuff such as *Transformers*. I know it’s daggy, but I have always loved robots. I wouldn’t say I’m fanatical about them, but I would have to say that one of my favourite things to watch is *Neon Genesis Evangelion*.” Yet Tom is not won over by all robots. He divulges that real robots, such as the armed ones built for combat that the US has been experimenting with disturb him. “That sort of shit scares the crap out of me. A couple of months ago I saw some news footage from Israel of a robot checking out a suicide bomber, and it was armed with a M16 rifle. There is enough violence in the world - I don’t need my toaster oven giving me shit.”

Another creative project that Tom amuses himself with is creating music under the name of Funkenbubble. He drifted into the music industry through his involvement with community radio station 2SER but had always been interested in music, particularly hip-hop, before he started creating it. “With new music technology it’s not about learning

an instrument, but learning a machine. You learn the parameters of what it does and however you interact with it is what the music is. I still don’t know how to play an instrument or read music. I do everything from hearing stuff. It’s not as if I start with a sound in my head and I think I want to make that. I find things and put them together and mess them up.” He remarks that he creates his artworks, which often incorporate mixed media and an unknown outcome, in the same random way. “I’m not actually sure what is going to happen when, for instance, I paint something and put crackle medium on it and then set it on fire.”

Some of his recent graphic design work includes layout of the Soundbyte and Virtual Museum sites for the Powerhouse Museum. The Virtual Museum site allowed him to get down and dirty with Flash to make a behind the scenes panoramic tour of the museum. This site has an industrial and mechanical aesthetic behind it with a high level of interactivity. “It was really fun actually. I love working on projects where I know it’s not just to sell a product. And while the museum is on some level a product, it’s also one that is educational and helps people. I hate porning myself out, especially when it involves my creativity.” The Soundbyte site on which he worked is a music network which links schools and sound-houses to allow them to share information and create music together online.

The problem with leading a multi-faceted creative life is that it doesn’t always amount to a career, but Tom thinks this suits him perfectly. “I’ve never had a career and I don’t think that all the things I do make up a career – I don’t have superannuation. I don’t think I’d really be into a career. I know that sounds weird. I get bored really quickly. I get bored doing the stuff that I do.” So it really is a good thing that he is interested in many areas because it allows him to switch between creative media when a block sets in. “I’m not constantly always creative. I can’t be a designer 24 hours a day and I can’t be a musician 24 hours a day. It’ll be late at night and I’ll get an idea and I’ll sit down and do it for four to five hours, but after that I run out of steam and when I come back to it the next day it’s not the same”.

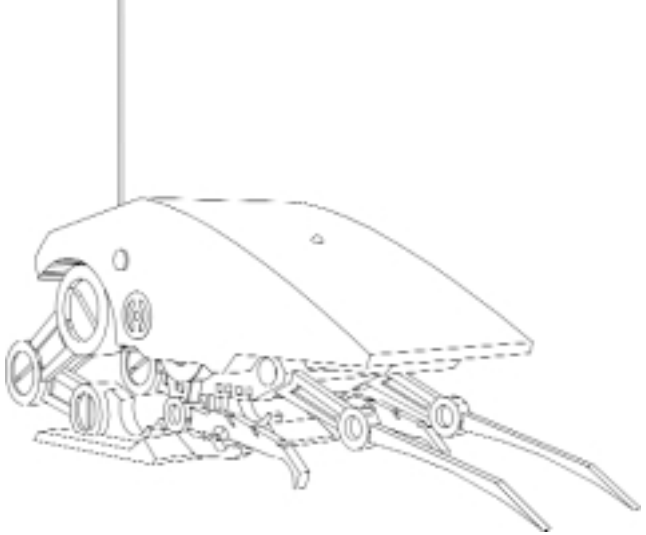
Working in a corporate environment doing graphic design would give him not only a regular job, but also an environment where someone would specify ‘XYZ’; yet this idea has caused him most concern. “I’ve always feared becoming an advertising whore – a graphic designer who doesn’t care who they work for as long as they get paid” he says, adding that he doesn’t have a problem with people that do – it’s just that he could never do it. But he strikes me as the type of person who is better skilled at roaming free within the creative process. Being an advertising whore wouldn’t work for him because he confesses to not wanting to sell any of his work as he just couldn’t bear to part with something he

had worked so tirelessly on. “I get really attached to one-off pieces of art, like paintings. It’s strange, I think producing CDs has done that to me. You know... spending hours compiling a CD and then four weeks later having 500 of them – all exactly the same. It makes you look at single piece of work totally differently.”

Being an instigator of many things creative and being a nice guy has given him a few problems, especially when it comes to passing opinion on other people’s music. “I try as much as possible to be straightforward with people. We often get demos and people wanting feedback, but it’s hard. If you’re not going to get on the compilation then the feedback is probably something you don’t want to hear. I don’t mind giving feedback, but I learnt long ago that I don’t like lying to people and telling them their music is great.” He mentions that he has rejected material from all of the contributors to *Qubit*, and that’s all part of being professional in part of a collective. “I kind of feel bad because I never reject what I do, but I guess that’s the thing. The thing is that I’ve never actually asked them what they think either. It’s bad. I should,” he discovers during our conversation.

It is this sort of democracy that he believes is missing from the mainstream music industry because many of the people involved in the mainstream are only looking for a way to make money out of it. “So much of the music industry is based around bullshit. The industry is part of what we do, but the mainstream is so much about bullshit and talking and no action. It really drives me insane sometimes.”

For Tom the underground music scene is about people creating music for their own personal satisfaction – after all, there’s no money in it. “People who are outside of what would be termed the underground structures look at music as being this thing of



DumpHuck releases to date:

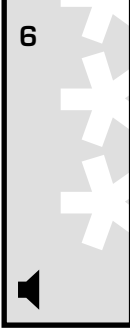
- Various Artists**
Beat & Squelch 1: Dancing on the Clouds
Beat & Squelch 2: Fire in the Bassbins
Beat & Squelch 3: The Future Was Yesterday
Beat & Squelch 4: Chansons D'amour Pour Mon Robot
- Sonic Professa**
Digital Kitchen
- Alphatown Collective, Deep Child, Funkenbubble, Meem**
Qubit
- Deep Child**
Chocolate Dubs

‘How can I make a living from it?’ You don’t if you’re in Australia. You can do it if you’re extremely lucky or if you’re willing to do a lot of things that you don’t like. Or if you’re willing to really change what you do to fit what record companies want and know that at the whim of a label you might be cut off.”

Tom also feels that a major attraction to underground music scenes is the intimacy with which one can know many other people in the scene, including the musicians themselves. “I think the Sydney scene is relatively healthy. It’s smaller than everywhere else so you can form a personal relationship to those you work with. You can talk to acts after they finish on stage. It kind of makes up for not being able to make a living out of it – you make a lot of friends”.

See cyclicdefrost.com for exclusive mp3 downloads of some of Tom’s more recent musical output as well as www.dumphuck.com for news about the label





Betaville Orchestra
Interview with Andrew Maher
by Sebastian Chan

A FILMIC DIALOGUE

Over the last eighteen months CDRs have been passed around Sydney containing deeply atmospheric, sparse beat experiments containing snatches of film noir dialogue, tiny Stockhausen samples, and cut ups of pre-1950s jazz. Under the name Betaville Orchestra these CDRs contained some striking moods and cleverly arranged samples, dark interludes, slight dub effects, subtle DSP, and vocal snippets. But in amongst making what now number over 30 individual moody tracks, Betaville Orchestra's Andrew Maher has been busy with his other more well-known project, Alphatown Collective. Alphatown Collective, widely known for their supa-rocking house, techno and electro mix of DJ set and live electronics, are fast moving forward as prime innovators in their field in Sydney with regular appearances at Mad Racket and Technikal. So how does a producer keep up these two almost opposing sound roles?

‘Alphatown consists of me, Luke Mynott and Adam Zielonka. We all went to high school together and shared a similar musical background. Early on we had a primarily live focus but that has changed now with a few compilation releases and our first vinyl release which will be coming out on [Sydney DJ] Biz-E's label Cliq. We try to draw a lot of influences into our sound and maintain a high level of floor energy with the emphasis on innovative techno, electro and house... The collaborative process with Alphatown is wonderful, but I found myself making these sad, quiet little tracks late at night which didn't really fit into the Alphatown approach... The Betaville Orchestra project came about because I wanted to do something that was a bit more personal and I found myself drifting towards doing stuff that wasn't so much dance-floor oriented. [Unfortunately] a lot of people think that somehow dancefloor music is less important and that non-dancefloor music is somehow more worthy or cerebral... and a lot of artists shy away from doing work that is very personal in electronic music. [Instead] they talk endlessly about processes and equipment as a way of dodging the issue. Rather than that, I deliberately set out to make stuff that reflected my inner life and the way I was seeing the world at the time; to express utter personal desolation, emptiness. All the beauty I saw seemed fragmented and isolated in a loveless world dominated by self-interest and savagery . . . People seemed to be just acting out these sad, fetid melodramas and I found myself drawn to film-noir and began getting right into that whole feel, as well as a lot of music from that era, specifically early tape-based art-music and jazz, chaotic, sad stuff... this was [probably] all fuelled by a very nasty case of insomnia.'

Andrew has recently signed a deal with new Sydney label Floating Point music. The label, run by the recording studio of the same name, is due to launch in early 2003 so there is an inevitable wait before any of the Betaville material reaches commercial shelves.



top 5:

Betaville Orchestra's recommended top five film noir and noir-influenced cinema:

- D.O.A (1949 version)**
- The Maltese Falcon**
- Bladerunner**
- LA Confidential**
- Chinatown**

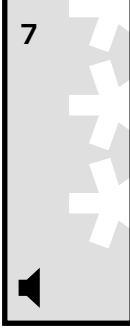
‘I don't consider anything I've done so far to be finished in any real sense and I'm building on some elements of what I've recorded for Floating Point. My early stuff is like a series of preparatory sketches, and what I'm trying to do now is more like a painting. I would like to use a lot of session musicians and vocalists, but put them through

the Betaville shredder . . . notice i don't say 'real instruments' . . . [but] I love vocals. When I first started Djing people used to always ask why so little of the music I played had vocals. Now when I drop a vocal people look at me strangely . . . We all use our voices and I can understand the skill that goes into a good vocal – they're great for stating things explicitly when you want to, especially in love songs.'

Using the snatches of the vocal from Aaliyah's pop hit 'Try Again' and Beats International's 'Dub Be Good To Me', Andrew is not coy about having broad tastes. 'I think a lot of people create their music taste, indeed much of their character, around what they don't like – rather than what they do like. For instance the idea that 'pop music is lame and it uses vocals so I won't because I'm a cool guy' or something. It is obviously a moronic and woefully adolescent attitude and I'm convinced as an artist you should build your ideas around what inspires and delights and seduces you. Purely reactionary movements in art are useful but rarely have much depth to them'.

Andrew elaborates; 'Like everyone, I grew up on pop music, thanks largely to a hip older sister. I also mucked around with loads of classical instruments and the mindfuck that that whole thing is. Then there was a lot of metal – of all the varieties – thrash, doom, death – and playing in bands ... and then the bright, shining, mind-blowing revelation that was rave and all the possibilities it offered hit me in 1992 ... I 've always thought that musical taste should be like a pebble thrown into a pond, rippling outwards and encompassing more and more ideas but still retaining the early influences. But for many people [it seems that] music is like fashion, and you throw out last years' clothes I guess, or you cynically re-embrace them to show how ironic and retro you are. This is an appalling concept to me ... I like re-assessing music I used to listen to. And it is interesting what still holds up and what doesn't; how my ear has improved; how production techniques have moved on – it's all very educational and reveals a lot ... I do still listen to the odd bit of Belgian hardcore techno – PCP Records especially, and acts like Mescalinium United. It still has a feel that is so uniquely compelling. And I'm also right into eastern European lullabies at the moment, they are so keen-ing, sad and lovely. [At some point] I'd love to do an album of lullabies in that tradition. I devour music constantly, and I live for that moment when you hear something so evocative that it causes a physical reaction, that intoxicates you ... I find the whole concept of safe, calming come-down music repulsive.'

Betaville Orchestra's new album should be out soon on Floating Point records. Meanwhile check cyclicdefrost.com for mp3s



Quark Kent
Interview with Giv Parvaneh
by Sebastian Chan

SUPERMANICURED

My first contact with Quark Kent was when a demo tape arrived in the mail from the leafy northern Sydney suburb of Berowra. It was 1997 and Berowra was about as likely to be a hotbed of electronic music as Tamworth. Trapezoid Amoeba, at the time, was Giv Parvaneh's first musical project and one that wore its influences on its sleeve – the electronic listening music of Warp and the pre-Squarepsuher-era Rephlex. It was a demo tape that showed a lot of promise and eventually it led to the Quark Kent being born, Giv and his friends setting up a party collective and record label called Fromage, and the release of his debut album Cosmiccaress.

‘There is a stage for every musician where they become inspired by their favourite artists and labels and then try and mimic what they love. I think this is a natural occurrence but eventually you develop your own sounds and move toward a different direction. Artists like µ-Ziq, Aphex Twin and that whole Warp/Rephlex sound inspired me to start making music and you could clearly hear those influences in my music at the time. I guess you still can but hopefully it's just a subtle influence rather than a direct rip-off ... Fromage was just an excuse for a few school friends to put on parties in Sydney with good music and to give not so well known musicians and DJs a chance to perform. This also gave me a chance to take things one step further and co-release my music through Fromage as a label. This is not a unique experience in Sydney, I can think of a dozen other organisations who were and still are doing the same thing so we were by no means pioneers in that field. In fact it was events like Freaky Loops, Frigid, Cryogenesis and the Kooky parties that inspired us to start up Fromage. But we have way too many small labels in Sydney with one or two releases each and all pretty much doing the same thing. It is so easy to release music these days and almost anyone can start his/her own record label but to do it right you have to be extremely dedicated.'

After the release of *SCSI Serenade* the Warp influences slipped further into the background. To the fore came a slinky smooth melodic synth warmth

drifting over soft touch beats, a kitsch electronic lounge sound. Naïve melodies and a paired-back simplicity is the over-riding theme in Quark Kent's music and one that revels in a minimalist studio setup. Totally eschewing trends towards hyper-rhythmicality or glitch, Quark Kent records are perhaps the electronic music equivalent of the indie folk revival.The second album, *Me You & The Moon* followed in 2001 after a gear trade in. 'I get to a stage where I just don't enjoy what I'm writing anymore and that has a lot to do with my equipment. There's only so much you can do with a synthesiser.



Once you've used all the sounds, your songs start to sound very similar. So every now and then I go through a cleansing process by getting rid of all my equipment and starting anew. Of course I always end up losing a lot of money this way. So I guess soon I'll go down that same path as what many other musicians are doing these days and start using a laptop and softsynths to create music. At least that way you don't really have limits on what sounds you can create and it's all so nice and compact so you don't need to worry about cables and moving your entire studio around when playing gigs ... I have always been a big fan of mini studios like the Groovebox or the MPC and I think the reason why prefer to work with them is that you can go from sitting on a couch watching TV to playing that first note within 15 seconds. There is no need to boot up your computer and all your gear so you are able to be a lot more spontaneous and therefore more likely to produce something you had intended to create when you got that sudden burst of inspiration. I remember when I had a lot of equipment, by the time everything was ready to be used, I was ready to

turn everything off and go to bed. So I guess in a sense I am helped by the limitations of my gear. I may not be able to have a broad range of sounds but at least I can quickly compose an idea without getting bogged down with technical details like loading samples into the sampler ... I don't know what's going to happen when I do finally decide to use soft synths but I'd say it is definitely going to change the way I think about music composition and therefore it will no doubt change my sound. But spontaneity is the most crucial element for me and as long as I'm able to get that first note out of the PC while I'm still inspired then I don't think making the switch to soft synths is going to affect my ability to create music.'

In the time since *Me, You & The Moon*, Giv moved has further from music taking up hard working day jobs for large IT companies and travelling. The new album, *Sixteen Neptunes* was scheduled for release, then re-scheduled, again and again. Now it is available as a free download on the web.'I had 16 tracks ready for release as my third LP but due to work commitments and lack of interest in the whole business aspect of music production, I kept putting it off. Now it's been over a year since those songs were recorded and they are not so new anymore, so I figured there's no point in keeping these songs on my hard disk and thought it would make more sense to just give them away and share the music with people. Releasing a CD requires a lot of energy and dedication and at the moment I don't have either one of those. Call me lazy but when you have the option to bypass distributors, pressing plants, mastering studios and every other formality that comes with releasing a CD, you bypass them and get your music out there without even leaving your bedroom ... My new/free album reached more people within a week of putting it online than my other 2 releases combined from the time of release. I had about 1000 downloads in just 5 days from all over the globe including Canada, USA, UK, Portugal, Japan and Spain. This is what I wanted to achieve. I wanted to share my music with people and this has certainly allowed me to do just that, without spending a cent. If I had done it the traditional way my CDs would still be in Glebe somewhere and I would be trying to work out how to pay off my debts ... But that said, I have a lot of respect for other musicians who take their music seriously and are trying to develop a career out it and I hope I'm not setting a bad example for them, but like I said my goals are very different and I've discovered a way to reach those goals. So don't be surprised if I decided to do all my releases this way in the future.

Quark Kent's web only album is available now at quarkkent.com You can also hear some tracks at cyclicdefrost.com



Lucas Abela
Interview with Lucas Abela
by Chloé Sasson

AUDIO TERRORWRIST



Some may say that it was the Gold Coast skegs who helped steer Lucas Abela towards experimental music. Having moved to the city of surf and sand at the age of 12, it was rashies and wax that first held Lucas’ attention. Less than two years later and after being roughed up by the local toughs, Lucas found that strange and experimental sounds were captivating his interests more than the point break; Teenage Jesus, The Jerks and Foetus, strange early 80s experimentalists. ‘I found myself searching import stores for new sounds. I don’t know why, so I guess my quest for this bore my need to create new sounds after the well ran dry, so to speak.’ These ‘new’ sounds were soon a regular part of Lucas’ Sydney radio show he started hosting 1992. Describing his on air playlists as encompassing a style of violent turntablism, the subsequent and inevitable equipment breakages lead to modifications that made his noise making contraptions even sturdier. Pins, rings and razorblades. Two years of noise saturated airwaves later, local act Phlegm located the dial and invited Lucas to do his first live gig. Maybe it wasn’t the skegs.

Today Lucas has unrefined his craft to the point of being one of Sydney’s most inaccessible artists. DJ Smallcock, Justice Yeldham and The Dynamic Ribbon Device have all been guises that Lucas has used over the years to deliver both recorded and live versions of a style that he calls ‘free noise’. ‘Essentially I’m an improviser in the jazz tradition of free jazz, however the instruments I use create noise, hence free noise.’ Continually pushing the sonic envelope, it seems that Lucas has dedicated his time to creating the most obscure noises and sounds possible, using whatever implements are at hand, mouth or foot. Favourite noise: ‘The sounds of computers crashing during a laptop performance interest me most, but when it comes to an aural aesthetic, I prefer abstract dynamic noise pieces to the wall approach to which some adhere. I like to get loud then quiet – then all over the shop!’ Live experimental music, particularly with the increasing presence of laptop-tronica, has unfortunately created an audience/performer dynamic that is often very static and non-interactive. This visual-

ly unstimulating work of an artist hidden behind screens and buttons tends to take away from the sounds being produced on stage. How often has an audience wondered whether a DAT machine could be as equally effective? It is this aspect of experimental music that Lucas overtly detests. Describing himself as an entertainer, Lucas appears to ensure that his audiences can all watch and enjoy his sets on a number of levels. But he is quick to dismiss the tag of performance artist: ‘If moving while playing makes one a performance artist and not a musician, I better sit down. [Because of my unconventional instrumentation] I am too often written off as a conceptual artist when conceptually I’m far more versatile. I produce sounds, a wide array of them, but people can’t seem to get past the performance element of my shows to actually listen.’ If they get the chance.

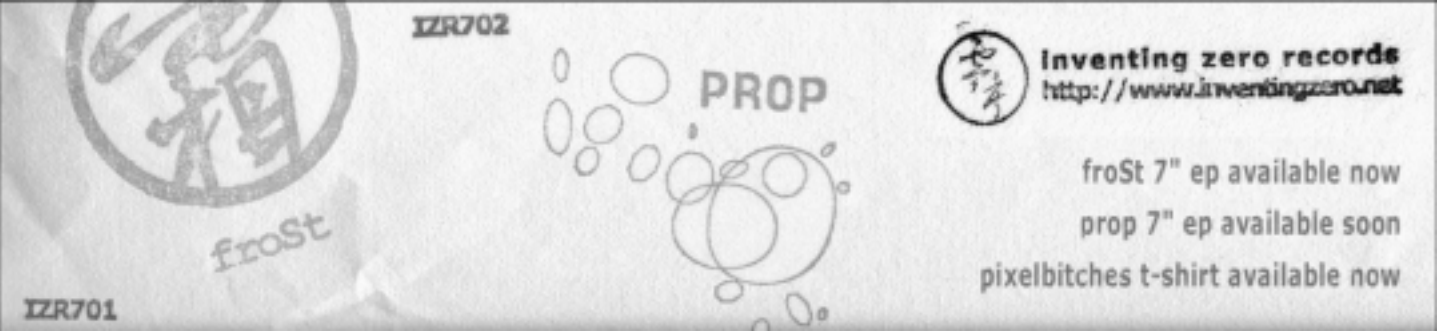
Standing by the philosophy that the medium he works in demands short performances, and for the simple reason that he gets bored with long winded sets, Lucas’s gigs rarely reach the 10 minute mark. ‘My shortest show was 40 seconds and my longest 15 minutes, I find that so much more interesting than a thundering PA for 60 minutes.’ Engaging his audiences with the physical aspects of sound, Lucas has entertained listeners around the world with his unique collection of instruments. ‘I don’t make what is traditionally considered electronic music. To me, truly electronic music exists only in machines, which play people. What I do is ultimately a tactile way to produce sound. Any sound created during my shows is born from physical cause an effect, its created there and then, nothing is hidden away in drives or chips.’ Instead it is mouth held styluses and spinning motors that form the foundation of Lucas’ sound structures. Everything from circular saws and vegetable cutters through to Tibetan Humming Bowls, all spinning at high speeds, are used as part of his unique take on turntablism. The real fun starts when the turkey skewers come out. As he explained to *Sound Projector Magazine* a few years back: ‘I stick a turkey skewer connected to a phonographic cartridge in my mouth and play that. I really like the mouth work, I think it is a lot more dynamic and changeable.’

While skewers or metallic saws may seem like a noise to avoid rather than enjoy, Lucas feels that his performances do offer something to his audiences. ‘I’m not trying to drive people out with my noise. I’m more interested in engaging people within the physical aspects of sound, not – ‘I’m loud take this!’.’ Besides, audiences have more than just harsh noise to avoid. ‘My latest [instrument] is a deck made from a sewing machine motor with a top speed of 2850rpm. I bolt down a stack of records like a wedding cake and play it with my skewers. I played this recently at Imperial Slacks and by the time I was done, chunks of vinyl jutted from the walls as if they were throwing knives.’ Performances like these come with their own ‘Don’t Try This at Home’ tag, as even the self trained experts suffer for their art. After a 1999 show in the UK, Lucas told *Sound Projector* that ‘apparently [the turkey stylus] has caused some damage to my mouth – everyone says it’s bruised. The inside of my cheek is torn apart every time I play a show and I have to leave a couple shows before I can play again without intense pain.’ And then. ‘There was this one time in band camp, I lacerated my right wrist with a blunt drum cymbal, which was mounted to a high powered motor. I was playing it with an amplified spring device that managed to catch on the cymbals jagged edge before forcing my arm down. Much damage to nerves and tendons as a result.’ It is easy to assume that the free noise and unique instruments Lucas uses to create his decibel-demented pieces are best suited for a live setting. Spinning motors and flying shards of vinyl don’t easily translate to headphone listening. But three albums have been spawned from this experimental beast. ‘I believe music is for the moment,’ agrees Lucas, ‘and it’s always better live. That’s why of my three albums in seven years, two have been unrelated to my live music.’ These include an album composed by a car (*A Kombi*), a second played on a high powered turntable (his live project) and a third of real time tape manipulation (*Peeled Hearts Paste*). ‘I could have made many more albums based on my live shows,’ he concedes. ‘Instruments like

my stylus glove were never really documented, but I like that. I’m here for the moment and I don’t care about prosperity. I want the seven people in my audience to experience something now, not later at a controlled volume.’ Recorded in 1994, *A Kombi – Music to Drive By* was Lucas’ debut release. Harking back to his surf roots, it was an album composed by a Kombi Van, with Lucas insisting that he was merely the recording observer. ‘My old van simply made extraordinary sounds! Bad earthing with the car stereo caused the entire vehicle to become amplified through its speakers most evidently when you turned the wipers on – the screech would fill the speakers!’ Apart from being Lucas’s most recognised album, the release of *A Kombi* was the catalyst for the creation of the Dual Plover label and his subsequent venture into CD manufacturing. After recording the album, Lucas found himself facing a hurdle familiar to most new artists: a record with no outlet for release. Having already knocked on the doors of virtually all the existing Australian experimental labels, and at a loss for any other local or overseas options, Lucas decided to set up Dual Plover. After a relatively successful release that prompted positive responses from both within Australia and overseas, (Merzbow thought it was ‘fucking great’, Bananafish wanted an interview) Lucas found he now owned a record label. With virtually no financial base and with the dole as his only source of income, the harsh financial realities of pressing up the record emerged. Letting his fingers do some walking, Lucas made contact with a local CD manufacturer, striking up a deal that promised substantial business. ‘I was doing Jerker, Sigma, Psychojama, and averaging one disc a month. Then word of my prices spread overseas and the orders started flooding in. Eventually the workload was enough that the factory reduced my prices further, then further still, to the point where it now subsidises my Dual Plover label.’ While still a small scale operation, Lucas’s CD pressing business has definitely been a boost for local artists. Albums that would normally never have been released are now reaching overseas mar-

kets, with reviews and tours resulting. It has also attracted interest from some overseas producers whose work, for various reasons, has been refused by other plants. Without going into too much detail, as it is still a sensitive issue for Lucas, the existence of the operation did mean that the Kid could still get his freak on Down Under. Uncomfortable from the beginning with the idea of running a label as a vehicle to release his own music, Lucas used the opportunity to mine some of Sydney’s many untapped resources. Avoiding any definable music policy, Lucas instead took on artists that would have otherwise remained untouched by other labels. As he told *No Frills* magazine in a previous interview: ‘No cohesion exists between the artists on our roster, except maybe a certain sense of otherness. As a label, our main concerns are audio works by people whose work is outside of current trends.’ Making a home available for music that most local labels wouldn’t touch, Dual Plover has put its name to a healthy number of releases including the now (underground) acclaimed *Rebirth of Fool* compilation series as well as a number of other artist releases, including Funky Terrorist’s *5!5!5!* and the self titled debut from Alternahunk. As an amusing aside, Deano Merino, who released his *Baby Crocodiles* CD through the label was voted by the women of Australia as the new Diet Coke man back in the late 1990s. Dual Plover is very proud to have him aboard.

Dual Plover can be found at
www.dualplover.com



Pivot/Triosk
Interview with Laurence Pike, Richard Pike
by Bim Ricketson

PIVOTAL PROJECTS



Drums scraped away in triple time. The guitarist picked out jazz notes and ground them like a rockstar. Xylophones floated away. The crowd was swaying. The band was sweating. A bloke yelled ‘I’m a rock pig’ with a drunken smile. No, this wasn’t pub rock and it wasn’t post-rock. It was Pivot.

Pivot have been playing around Sydney for a few years now, their reputation steadily growing as imaginative live performers straddling a number of genres. Based in the discipline of free improvisation, the five-piece combine rock, electronica and jazz into a beautifully building and thudding opera. Songs build up from a single phrase and swerve off in any direction as

individual players add their flavours to the boiling broth. With their combined musical talent, a grant to record their first album and interest from influential European musicians, Pivot may be on the brink of big things.

‘The philosophy of Pivot is to create a seamless mixture of sounds without it being ‘fusion’ music,’ says guitarist Richard Pike. ‘This has a lot to do with the instrumentation we’ve chosen too – that is drums/bass/guitar/keys/turntables. They are the five of the most common modern instruments. So it’s jazz, it’s rock, it’s glitch, but it’s not at all.’

Citing influences as diverse as Aphex Twin, The Police and John Coltrane, Pivot commit themselves to mastering a range of genres and combining them into focused and concise improvisation. While many jazz musicians do try and pursue a more contemporary sound, ‘inevitably it ends up sounding like Weather Report or drum n bass with a saxophone solo,’ says Richard. ‘That stuff is all valid I guess, but it doesn’t do jazz any favours in terms of progressing it into the 21st century. As much as I love and respect its history, and the art of improvis-

ing, I want to make jazz music that reflects what’s actually happening today.’

With a few years to hone their skills and a grant from the Australia Council’s Buzz initiative, they have begun recording an album. A mixture of improvisation and pre-written tracks, they are recording overdub guitars, keyboards, samples, vibraphone and percussion. ‘A similar recording approach to bands like Tortoise, Trans Am or Flanger,’ says Richard. Citing Burnt Friedman’s band Flanger is not surprising; both bands combine jazz rhythms and electronica. ‘Burnt’s project Flanger has probably had a direct influence on me,’ says Richard, ‘ ‘Glitch’ music with improvisation is a very exciting concept to me. It’s musical aim, in terms of the mix of jazz impro and electronic exploration is very inspiring, it’s very forward thinking.’

The compliment was returned when last year Friedman invited Pivot to jam over some of his pre-recorded loops after seeing them play at Frigid. The outcome will be a Nu Dub Players vinyl-only EP release on German ~Scape records. Richard will also be providing some Django Reinhardt inspired guitar improvisation to the next Flanger record and Friedman has remixed a Pivot track, ‘The DLF Faces The Flux Modem God.’ Quite a coup.

Pivot are a band with everything. Huge talent, a musical vision, topshelf international connections. All that’s left is to record the album, save music and rule the world. ‘It’s exciting,’ says Laurence ‘and hopefully our album will be too good to ignore.’ I think he might be right.



PIVOT SATELLITE BANDS
The busy multi-talented members of Pivot also belong to some pretty special orbit bands.

Triosk:
Laurence Pike put together Triosk with Pivot keyboard player Adrian Klumps and bass player Ben Waples. An acoustic/electronic jazz-based piano trio, Triosk has come together with another recent German visitor, Jan Jelinek. But their meeting was a little more unusual. Pike was taking random fragments from the radio late at night to make loops which later became the basis for a few Triosk tunes. Pike later learnt that he had sampled ‘Loop-Finding-Jazz-Records’ by Jan Jelinek, who himself had sampled fragments of jazz records to capture its textures. The fact that Pike was sampling Jelinek’s album in an attempt to make jazz is a beautifully ironic musical moment.

During the subsequent tour Pike approached Jelinek and explained how he had come across Jelinek’s music and what he was using it for. Jelinek was flattered and after listing to a Triosk demo suggested they record a collaborative EP. ‘I can’t imagine a more ideal artist than Jan to work with Triosk,’ says Pike ‘It’s amazing to have someone of his calibre to act as the fourth voice in the group. Artists such as Jan are pushing things in new directions, which is really inspiring. What’s most exciting for me is the rare opportunity to realise my vision in terms of this project, and potentially share it with a wider audience. I think the results, regardless of what genre it may qualify as, will be some really unique music.’

Laurence Pike Trio:
Laurence Pike, Adrian Klumps & Ben Waples. Acoustic jazz trio.

Night on Earth:
Richard Pike, Laurence Pike and Neal Sutherland. Songs written by Richard. Like Pivot with singing.

Eduardo Santone and The Velvet Fog:
Eduardo Santone, Richard Pike, Laurence Pike and Neal Sutherland. Folk rock. More singing!

Homebrand Deyell’s Missile Survival of the Fiddes

top 10 albums

Boards of Canada
Music Has The Right To Children
RP: Best analogue keyboard work on the planet. This stuff is poetry that speaks to you more with every listen. Like any good poem should. These guys have an incredibly intense and acute sense of texture and sounds. Sick ass beats too.

Miles Davis
Kind of Blue
LP: It’s almost cliché to include this one, as so much has been written about it. I’ve got maybe 50 of Miles’ records, and perhaps there are other albums that may be more relevant to Pivot (*Live-Evil*, *On the Corner* etc), but discovering this album was such an important and influential turning point.

Autechre
LP5
RP: A thesis could be written on this album! It’s totally pure computer music. It’s faceless and inhuman, but at the same time darkly emotional. The CD artwork communicates this feeling too. If you listen to it alone late at night you feel like Autechre is a computer struggling to communicate with you.

John Coltrane
A Love Supreme
LP: A landmark album. Coltrane’s classic quartet at its peak. You will struggle to find a more spiritual, intense and uplifting record in any genre. A meaty breakfast album.

The Police
Regatta De Blanc
RP: The greatest rock band of all time. Sting’s songwriting is clear and succinct, yet the energy of the band is so raw and adventurous.

Squarepusher
Feed me weird things
LP: Tom Jenkinson’s approach to drum programming is amazingly organic, as if he was actually improvising like a jazz musician, at a million miles an hour. Burnt Friedman is the other master of this style of programming (check out ‘Templates’ by Flanger). I guess that’s why this album makes so much sense to me and it’s one of the many things I love about it. With an extra limb or two, I reckon I could play the drums like him.

Aphex Twin
Richard D. James album
LP: I can clearly remember the first time I heard this album when it was released. It was like I was listening to something from 20 years in the future, or perhaps another planet. A truly amazing and visionary album.

Radiohead
OK Computer
RP: This album re-instilled my faith in rock music. It proves that 2 guitars and keyboards can live in wondrous harmony together. Thom Yorke’s lyrics paint this amazingly perceptive picture of modern life. Lyrics, of course, bear no direct relevance to Pivot (as we don’t have a singer), but the artistic and modern awareness is definitely important to me.

Tortoise
Millions Now Living Will Never Die
RP: This album blew my mind progressively with every listen. It’s intricate soundtrack music. Everything is thrown in there without it sounding like a hybrid. Great headphone music.

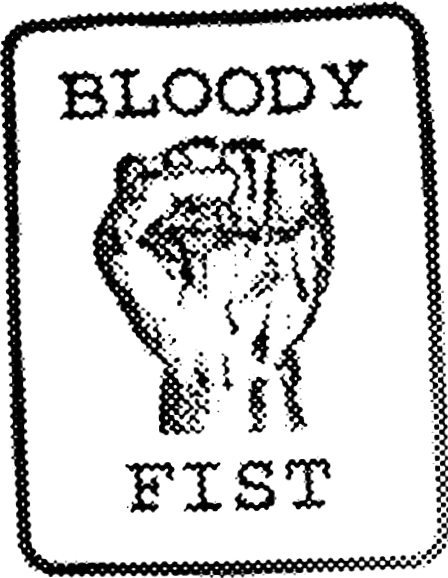
The Necks
Piano, Bass, Drums
RP: The Necks have developed this organic and totally improvised concept into a well-mastered art. Creating music from nothing but their own collective unconscious – that’s been a real inspiration for me. Lloyd (Swanton, bass player of The Necks) came down to see us play once, which I thought was very cool of him, as I’m such a fan. LP: This or any of their albums is an obvious influence for Pivot and also Triosk.

Bloody Fist Label Profile

Interview with Marc Quinn, ‘Young British Artist’
by Adrian Ferra

DOG CONTROL, BITCH

Bloody Fist has just celebrated its 8th year of releasing hard and abrasive music. In those 8 years, Bloody Fist has barely registered as a blip on the radar of Australia's so-called ‘specialist’ media despite continual international support and recognition. On the other hand, the output of Marc Quinn is internationally infamous. Quinn is the Young British Artist enfant terrible who shot to fame with his spectacular sculpture *Self*, a cast of his head using five litres of his own blood. Later works have seen him taking the concept into new and exciting dimensions with *Shithead* consisting of a headcast filled with the artist's own faeces, and most recently *Baby* – a cast of his baby son's head using his puréed placenta. But where artists' shit and blood have taken the world by storm, Marc has continued his Bloody Fist project in relative obscurity. Few in the art world have recognised Quinn's other output or the elaborate context that he has created. But the connections are obvious really – a fixation with biology and bodily fluids underpinned by topical ruminations on the nature of art and death.



After so many years of neglect and misinformation, a recent Quinn retrospective celebrating Bloody Fists’ 8th year was assembled for the Tate Museum in Liverpool, England. This offered the perfect opportunity for a meeting with Marc Quinn (or if you prefer his Kafkaesque alter ego Mark N). We had arranged to meet in his studio apartment overlooking the beautiful Newcastle beaches, on the northern coast of Australia. It was exactly as I'd imagined it behind the anonymous frosted glass door on the side street: clean, white, stainless steel kitchen, huge book shelves, comfy leather sofas and the infamous chest freezer containing ‘bits and pieces’, as Quinn mysteriously put it. While the studio was exactly as I'd expected, Quinn the artist wasn't. I thought he would be cocky, even laddish. Instead, he is confident and funny but with a quiet manner and hypnotic dark eyes to match the head-to-toe black he wears to protect him from the hot Newcastle sun.

Locating Bloody Fist in Newcastle was an easy choice for Marc. ‘After graduating from Cambridge I returned to London but wanted to do something as far away conceptually as possible. The furthest place I could think of was somewhere like Manchester or Newcastle. Imagine my surprise when I heard that there was a Newcastle in Australia! Australia was once famously described as the ‘Arse-

end of the World’, and I thought Newcastle, Australia would be a perfect metaphor for my ideas at the time, I was thinking a lot about shit and the result of these processes can be seen in works such as ‘Shithead’ and ‘Shit Painting 28/8/97’.”

Newcastle and shit are obvious themes in Bloody Fist, repeated across the back catalogue. The roster is a register of asocial misfits with names like Memetic and Embolism, nearly all of whom live in the immediate Newcastle area which radiates from the north of Sydney to the outback. The city was originally built on industry and the remains of factories and mine shafts pock the town centre and surrounding suburbs. These mining scars partition the community as well; the new economy has developed Newcastle from a steel city into a student town. That fissure between turbulence and atrophy lends itself to Bloody Fist. The closure of the last BHP facility in 1998 was celebrated by Quinn with the *Newcastle Who Gives A Fuck* EP constructed solely from the sampled machine noise of the plant. Unfortunately the project was halted at the last minute with a BHP injunction on the record, surrounded by claims of intellectual theft and sample clearance. The same year, legal problems also scuppered the *Hello Bellybutton - Goodbye Arsehole* tribute album. Thankfully, ‘Steelworks Requiem’ has resurfaced on Nasenbluten's *Dog Control* (2002) album – *Goodbye Arsehole* will unfortunately never see the light of day.

Issues of theft and copyright are not unknown to Quinn. His video installation ‘The Origin of the World’ showed a video loop of a hand caressing and penetrating a vagina – a sly wink to the famous 19th Century French artist Gustave Courbet and his revolutionary ‘L'Origine du Monde’. Bloody Fist output is similarly built on recycled sounds, breakbeats and audio vignettes raw; unprocessed excluding the inherent static coating multiplied from outdated computers and broken audio equipment. While the sound of Bloody Fist is not easily pigeonholed, this bleary insulation is its trademark. Some have labelled it cunt-core, which is not entirely a misnomer. Quinn's visual reference to Courbet echoes the Bloody Fist aesthetic of basing releases entirely

on samples and reprocessing them through archaeological 8-bit Amiga computers and antediluvian software. The result is difficult, uncompromising and varied. Releases like *FIST06 Appetite For Destruction* (Syndicate, 1996) are typical of a hard-core and jungle influenced sound, while *FIST16 No Copyright!* (Overcast, 1998) showcases Marc's cut and paste DJing technical ability. Other releases on the Bloody Fist catalogue range from hard gabba techno to hard drone – basically anything that is hard and abrasive.

Quinn observes a bodily commitment to art. His latex whole-body moulds offer a negative three dimensional image of the artist, prised open for escape like a broken , empty chrysalis. His amputee sculptures continue this bodily obsession. ‘The idea,’ says Quinn, ‘came from being in the British Museum and watching people looking at fragmented sculpture. I thought, if someone came in looking like that in real life, they would have a completely different reaction.’ Quinn's challenging yet detailed and pristine amputee sculptures refer to the classical tradition of sculpture, yet also subvert this by questioning the notion of the heroic and the beautiful. The artificial perfection of the superwhite marble adds another layer to this complex examination of human perfection. This diametric of heroic and beautiful, deformation and degradation are continued in Bloody Fist cover art, a typical example is *FIST15*, the *Fraughman* E.P. (Fraughman, 1988) where we are presented with images of deformed foetuses, filtered through the indiscriminating eye of a Xerox machine. We are detached from the sickening subject matter, and can almost view it in a comical light - a grotesque oversized forehead and squinty misconstructured eyes peer out from this carnivalesque freak show. Frankly, its funny.

Life, mortality, decomposition and disintegration are big themes. The quick and tragic nature of beauty can easily be accidentally captured in a photo; from this pathos a blunt and almost political power can exceed any personal meaning in the image. Quinn's custom freezing techniques seen in *Eternal Spring* preserve not only the beauty of flowers, but their structure as well. Viewers are greeted with a refrigerated glass case and witness the flower beds as a frozen cadaver. Bloody Fist's *Dead Girl* project goes further – it could even be seen as a thoughtful meditation on the cult of death and celebrity, but Quinn refuses to be drawn into conversation on the topic. “You either get it or you don't. People are more open-minded these days about art. It should be totally accessible - you may know nothing about it and still get something from it.”

What drives an artist? Quinn says he always wanted to be an artist, but had been worried that it would be impossible to make a living. Then, at boarding school in his teens, he found out that there was such a thing as contemporary art and that if

you were any good, you could get by. “The most important thing is if you can sell your work and carry on doing it. And there's always been people buying the work.” Indeed there is. Bloody Fist is recognised across Europe and the US and Marc regularly tours internationally. Like his Y.B.A. contemporaries, Quinn's work sells for astronomical amounts on the London art scene. His most infamous work, *Self* was purchased by Brit-Art impresario Charles Saatchi for an undisclosed amount. Rather ironically, it was recently destroyed by mistake when it was defrosted by construction workers in Saatchi's kitchen who accidentally unplugged his fridge. Quinn characteristically sees the humour “I think its great!! Imagine spending that amount of money on something and then have to mop it up off the floor. I nearly pissed myself when I heard about it!! I mean, I literally had to race to the bathroom because I'm saving my piss for one of my next works.” Comments like this raise my suspicion. “No, really! I've won a commission for a water feature on the site of the towers in New York. It will consist of a number of whole body casts swimming in a pool of my own piss. It's a huge undertaking and a suitably sombre project.”

As a social document or testament to the 21st century, how are future people going to interpret this? But then isn't that what art is all about? Preserving present possibilities. We can never know what makes us modern, our modernity can only be translated from the future. It's still a hoary old chestnut though: what makes art and what doesn't? We live in a secular world with a state sponsored avant-garde and a metropolitan elite. Quinn is not an apologist for his work: “You could say that I'm one of the people who made it happen. I mean, the time was right, but it wasn't conferred from above. It was: ‘fuck it, I want to make this thing, so let's go and make it. So it was more of a kind of guerrilla attitude.’ But surely anyone can freeze blood? Anyone can make noise? “Yes, but you don't.” he explains “You don't have to be into conceptual art to appreciate my work, it's all blood and shit to some people, but ultimately, people will buy any old shit these days.’

Dog Control is Out Now. Look for FIST28 from Epsilon and FIST29 from Guyver Out Soon. The 8th birthday celebrations for Bloody Fist take place throughout August. Check bloodyfist.com.au for details.



A bowl by bowl description of the artist's work?



an artist at the height of his powers?



Frigid Retrospective

Interview with Sub Bass Snarl & Sir Robbo

by Sebastian Chan

COOL MEMORIES

This month Frigid, Sydney’s weekly electronic music night turns six. Established in July 1996 by Sub Bass Snarl (Sebastian Chan & Luke Dearnley) and Sir Robbo (Shane Roberts) Frigid has played host to hundreds of young local producers, DJs and a selection of the more interesting electronic acts from around the globe. Four venues and six years down the track we piece together a three-way interview between Seb, Luke and Shane as they reminisce about what’s happened.

BEFORE FRIGID, CRYOGENESIS.

Before Frigid the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Well no, actually. Frigid started in July 1996 but long before then Luke and Seb were involved in a similar project called Cryogenesis. Luke explains, ‘We got sick of always playing hard-core techno and started getting interested in chill out music as an aside to our regular gigs. Around the same time [1993] a local crew called Punos (‘sound’ upside down) had moved from putting on raves to focussing on chillout events, and they would be hired by rave promoters to take care of the whole production of chillout rooms for big parties.

‘Our interest in that music and our frustration that other people’s so-called recoveries were just micro-raves in disguise, lead us to want to do a proper recovery chillout on a Sunday. The idea was to create a space for people who were still ‘up’ from their Saturday night rave adventures to come down in, with relaxing, interesting music and comfortable surroundings. It was a fortnightly event in a pub in the Rocks called the Dumbarton Castle [now a towering block of units]. Every Sunday morning we would lug all the pub furniture down a narrow staircase and fill the room with massive velvety cushions courtesy of Punos. It used to run midday till 10pm and the sun would set over the water right in front of us – the perfect visuals for a Sunday chillout gig. It was pretty much the first time we’d ever put on a regular gig and without the encouragement, support and resources of Punos it would never have happened ...



SIR ROBBO’S ULTIMATE FRIGID MIXTAPE

Sir Robbo has put together a set of memorable Frigid tunes from the last few years. Seb and Luke’s selections are on the *Cyclic Defrost* website <cyclicdefrost.com> along with top fives from Ollo, Prince Valium, Sleepy Robot, Clark Nova and Kid Calmdown. We would recommend you put them onto your own mix tape and listen to them when you grow old.

Cutty Ranks
‘Cool Down’
(Declic, France)
An upful rudeboy anthem that’s rocked Frigid as far back as I remember....

The Sugarcubes
‘Birthday
(Justin Robertson remix)’
(One Little Indian)
A long time favourite... takes me way back... and one dropped by Renegade Soundwave back in 95.

St. Etienne
‘Nothing Can Stop Us Now’
(Heavenly)
Still lifts my heart - an emotive modern pop classic... Those flutes!

Fourtet
‘Glasshead’
(Output)
A Globe-era rumbling post-psych breakbeat monster - watch your head!

Space Pimp
‘The Pimp’
(Clear)
Sexy electro nuttiness

Future 3
‘Top 1000’
(April)
A recent Danish nu-dub classic

Ward 21
‘Ganja Smoke’
(John John/Greensleeves)
Ahem! This tune rocked our 5th birthday celebrations at Newtown RSL...a personal anthem of sorts.

Black Uhuru
‘Boof N’ Baff N’ Biff ‘
(Fila Brazillia Remix #1)
(Quango)
One of my favourite bands remixed by one of the nineties classiest production

DJ Krush
‘A Whim’
(Mo Wax)
A tune of swirling beauty from Japan’s ever-humble breakbeat maestro

Howie B
‘Birth’
(Pussyfoot)
Simply lovely – an Atomic Hi-Fi staple

The Beta Band
‘Won’
(Regal)
Vibes! psych/pop/ragga/rnb for the new millennium.

The Pharcyde
‘Runnin’
(Delicious Vinyl)
The sound of summer 1996 in Bronte

Rhythm And Sound w/Tikiman
‘Never Tell You’
(Burial Mix)
Taking roots to the next dimension.

The Happy Mondays
‘Bob’s Yer Uncle’ (remix)
(Factory)
Who’d have ever thought six, such un-sexy blokes were capable of producing one of the steamiest pieces of wax since ‘Je T’aime – moi non plus’

Seb continues, ‘After about six months it became increasingly expensive and tiring to run the recovery. Sometimes we’d be playing at a party the previous night and then have to go straight down and start lugging furniture. And we were both at uni at the same time which didn’t exactly help. And then the pub decided to close down ...

‘The idea of a recovery lay dormant for a while until in early 1995 we felt it was time to try doing a free outdoor recovery event. We lugged a small PA and generator down to Cooper Park, Bondi and got the word out. It was a magical day and even the ranger who appeared at the behest of some angry tennis players [‘that “noise” is putting us off our game dahhhling!'] was suitably impressed with the relaxed and uncomplicated nature of the event. It certainly wasn’t a rave.

‘After that we started to think about other places to do a similar thing and we ended up at Peacock Point in East Balmain. The PA arrived late and the punters who showed up ended up dancing on the rocks above us facing the harbour. It was there that Dale [Prince Valium] jokingly suggested we should look at the islands in the harbour ... the first island chill adventure happened in 1995 and has been a regular Sydney fixture each year since ...’

BEFORE FRIGID, ATOMIC HIFI

Sir Robbo was a member of reggae sound system Atomic HiFi in the mid-90s and before that the drummer for seminal Sydney ska band The Latenotes. In the years between The Latenotes and Atomic HiFi, Shane’s life was impacted by Madchester and rave. Although the Frigid crew didn’t meet each other until 1995, we’d all been to many of the same events. Shane explains, ‘Jason Willo and I had talked about putting a sound system thing together for quite a while – we wanted to present our musical selections of reggae, dub, funk and hip hop in a different way, incorporating live singers and players, effects and sampling into the mix along with a revolving team of selectors – initially there were about 8 of us DJing! My old ska band, The Latenotes, had gotten back together for two reunion shows in January 1995 and we travelled to Melbourne for one of them. On the way back Willo talked our fill-in keyboard player Florsch [Sonik Professa] into being our sample guy. Our percussionist Bongo Caveman was recruited as well and we picked up Sloth on trumpet and occasional keyboards along the way. We’d also have MCs doing stuff every now and then. Our old mate Lyndon and a guy called Andrew brought the more abstract downtempo stuff to the mix like early Mo’ Wax and Ninja Tunes, and we were all kinda interested in the jungle stuff that was coming out at the time. We did a couple of straight-up reggae sound-clash things with NastyTek, Soulmaker and the like but from there things started to get more diverse. We would play down at Crucial D’s ‘Phat Chalice’ nights mixing up all kinds of stuff and up in Newcastle quite often, where we were introduced to the darkmaster himself , Mark N, and started to put on our own events. An early one was at the Golden Ox straight after a Vibe Tribe style party – that was interesting – we played all day!”

The turning point came with Vibe Tribe’s Carmageddon in 1995. Unlike their other free parties in Sydney Park, Carmageddon was a fundraiser for an anti-M2 motorway protest, one of the few Vibe Tribe events to be held in a warehouse, and the only one to be held right next to the Federal Police offices. Ju Ju Space Jazz and a host of techno DJs played in the main area and in the ‘other room’ it was Sub Bass Snarl, Atomic HiFi and Nasty Tek. Shane continues, ‘Carmageddon was a pretty pivotal moment as I recall – Atomic were in the ‘chill’ space alongside you guys and Nasty Tek and it just turned into a totally wild separate party of its own – a mash up of dancehall, dub, hip hop, ‘trip hop’ (as it was known), jungle and old reggae – it was very exciting and totally new for Sydney at that time – people just responded in the biggest way and I could certainly feel a shift in peoples’ tastes for new music at that time.”

During the latter half of 1995 and early 1996, Sub Bass Snarl and Atomic Hi Fi did a few collaborative events. The Journalists Club behind Central Station (now also a block of units) hosted two events – one with Renegade Soundwave and another as a Cryogenesis fundraiser. This was an incredibly vibrant time in Sydney. DJs were experimenting with new styles, jungle and ‘trip hop’ had shaken things up considerably. Both Atomic HiFi and Sub Bass Snarl started playing beyond their previous niche crowds. Basscode and All Funked Up started series of events that took their DJs’ normal crowds into new sounds. Gemma and Seymour Butz had started up Club Kooky down in the Club 77 space on William Street and it was packed out every Sunday night. All Funked Up’s Bernard deBroglia (Kid Dolphin) started a design business called Soul Pacific and began to put out a fabulous zine called *Head Shots* which Shane started doing work on from a warehouse space in Chalmers Street. During this period too, the Vibe Tribe riot police raid happened, Anna Wood happened. The old ways were cast aside and in 1996 when things should have been looking pretty grim, a new vibrancy had emerged. Not too much later we got an offer from Kinselas to fill their vacant Sunday afternoon slot.

THE BIRTH OF FRIGID

‘The Frigid name came about as a wordplay on chillout. We were throwing around words one night – Stiff (too promiscuous), Rigid (too much like stiff), Fridge (too boring) – until we came up with Frigid which has stuck ever since. I still like it because it implies that we have nothing to do with so-called ‘sexy clubbing’ or ‘sexy house” Seb explains. It was

QUESTIONNAIRE

Cyclic Defrost wants to deliver the best possible magazine experience and help Frigid be the Sunday night out you need it to be. Back in 1999 we handed around a questionnaire at Frigid and were inundated with responses which then informed our decisions regarding which acts to book, who to tour, and what you wanted. Now, three years later, that time has come again.

There are three ways you can complete the questionnaire:

1.

Complete it online at <www.cyclicdefrost.com>. This will make you eligible for CD prize goodies.
2.

Complete it and post it to us at *Cyclic Defrost*, P.O. Box A2073, Sydney South, NSW 1235, Australia. You will also be in the running for some tasty giveaways.
3.

Or simply complete it and return it to us at Frigid on Sunday night. We will give anyone who fronts up with a completed questionnaire on Sunday August 25, September 1 or September 8, free entry.

THE IMPORTANT STUFF

Name: _____

Postal Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Country: _____

Email address: _____

Are you on the Frigid/Cyclic Defrost email mailing list?

☐ yes ☐ no

If not, do you want to be added?

☐ yes ☐ no

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Occupation: _____

WHAT DO YOU LIKE?

Last 3 books you read:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Last 3 films you saw:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Last 3 albums you bought:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Favourite radio station:

3 websites you visit regularly:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Favourite ever event (rave, festival, party)

1. _____

5 tracks you couldn't live without:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

FRIGID

Have you ever been to Frigid?

☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, how often do you go?

☐ every week
☐ once every month
☐ once every couple of months
☐ once every year

What are the 3 things you like best about Frigid?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What are the 3 things you dislike most about Frigid?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Which 3 local acts would you like to hear at Frigid?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Which 3 international acts would you like to hear at Frigid?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What is the most you would pay to hear international acts at Frigid?

PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS

Which of the following have you been to in the 12 months?

☐ Theatre
☐ Opera
☐ Ballet
☐ Symphony orchestra
☐ Art gallery
☐ Museum
☐ Sydney Opera House
☐ Sydney Festival event
☐ Fringe Festival event
☐ Community festival
☐ Dance party/rave
☐ Rock concert
☐ Outdoor festival
☐ Other (please specify)

Which 3 arts events have you enjoyed most in the last 12 months?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How much money do you spend on going to arts events each month?

How much money do you spend on CDs or vinyl each month?

Are you a member of a community radio station?

☐ yes ☐ no

CYCLIC DEFROST

How many people have read your copy of Cyclic Defrost?

Favourite 3 parts of the magazine?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

If you had to choose would you:

☐ want a fatter magazine
☐ want a full colour magazine
☐ want us to print more copies
☐ have a cover CD

Have you read the online version of the magazine <www.cyclicdefrost.com>?

☐ yes ☐ no

Have you downloaded any of the music from the online version of the magazine?

☐ yes ☐ no

Is there anything in particular you would like to see added to the print version of the magazine?

GENERAL

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Privacy: *Cyclic Defrost* respects your privacy and any information submitted to us will be held in the strictest confidence and not supplied to any third party without your explicit consent. We may, however, perform statistical analysis on your answers and this may be provided to third parties including the Australia Council for the Arts in a non-personally identifiable summarised form. No personally identifying details will be passed on to any third parties.

The Orb
‘Towers Of Dub’
(Wau Mr Modo)
Where would we be without the orb eh?

David Holmes
‘My Mate Paul’
(Go Beat)
Freak-au-go-go!

Aphrodites Child
‘Loud Loud Loud’
(unknown)
Thanks to the Ollo boys for this Greek psych-pop gem..

D*Note
‘Coming Down’
(Dorado)
Music from a funny little British film we showed at the Dendy which I think we all found something in – the title says it all...

Tino Corp.
‘Toasted Dub’
(Tino Corp.)
A sampledelic dubwise hip hop treat from Jack Dangers from Meat Beat Manifesto and friends – comedy-dub – now there’s a genre!

The Jamayka Boyz
‘Rastaman’ (Dub From Creation)
(Junior Boys Own)
Sublime reggae-house from the Ballistic Brothers and a bass-line that causes planes to drop from the skies..

Ultramarine
‘Saratoga’
(Brainiak)
One arvo in 1993 I woke and moaned ‘last night a DJ saved my life’ – the night was a Punos ambient party in Campbell street, the DJ was Seb, and this was the tune...

DJ Crystl
‘Perpetual Motion’
(Payday)
A Kinselas favourite – ambient jump-up jungle done with style and grace.

every Sunday and the idea was to have guests each week and alternate the organisation of the lineups between Atomic HiFi and Sub Bass Snarl. Shane remarks, ‘I can’t remember for how long we did alternating weeks, but before too long Atomic Hi-Fi sort of fell apart and I was hosting the night with you fellas every week’. Luke adds, ‘I seem to remember we were only planning to do four weeks of gigs at Kinselas as a way of getting the deposit together for another island event. Back then I was of the opinion that weekly clubs are really hard to sustain and it was therefore one of the last things I would have chosen to do.’

Bernard from Soul Pacific lent his excellent design skills to the first series of flyers which were always done in one month blocks. Seb explains, ‘the idea was to make collectable sets of flyers where the front image from each week would fit together to create a meta-picture. I was thinking about my old cricket cards from the 81-82 series I had at primary school. You used to collect all 300 or so of the cards and then put them together in order upside down and you’d get this aerial shot of the MCG...Of course, the Frigid cards never got bigger than a set of 4 ... Shane, Bernard and myself started to conceive of them around themes – black revolutionaries, cult film actors. People started collecting them as we had planned, and it was very effective promotion. The first six months of Frigid happened to be at just the right time: Metabass & Breath were in their infancy, Raised By Wolves had started to move from hip hop into instrumental productions, and we got Mark N down from Newcastle to Sydney to do a hip hop trick set. He blew everyone away. Of course even then Frigid was not without its detractors. Famously, one guy announced to us that ‘maaaate, this night’s like an RSL club’. And our farewell to Kinselas was an RSL-themed night where everyone played in their dressing gowns watching the TV and playing Atari 2600.’

ENTER THE DRAGON, THE DENDY & GLOBE YEARS

Frigid lay dormant over the summer of 1996/7 until two of our friends from the Dendy Cinema decided they needed to bring some quality entertainment into their bar. The bar, previously a cocktail lounge, offered an excellent venue with an in-house projector, comfy seats, a former Olympic marathon champion as chef, and some of the best coffee and bar staff we’ve ever had.

Shane remembers, ‘I think the Dendy was when we really hit our stride; we had a clear idea of what we wanted to do by then and it was a space that offered a host of new possibilities. The film idea really kicked off there and that was brilliant – an early cult film and then music from about 9 ‘til late with visuals running all night. I was always running around frantically on Sunday arvo trying to get fresh films together!’ Luke continues ‘We did the

door ourselves in shifts and really got to know our crowd through that. I remember it was very friendly, you could just go up and sit at a table with a group of people and chat to them, ask them what they thought of the music, the films, and what acts they’d like to see in the future. You must remember that this was the Dendy before anyone knew it as a club. Back then it wasn’t one, it was just a swish bistro for a cinema. The place was very plush and that was its charm; a very comfortable place to relax with friends on a Sunday evening.’ Shane adds, ‘I think



our musical ideas really started to gel during this time too and we developed a strong sense of identity albeit based on a fairly eclectic palette of sounds. The film soundtrack remix nights were a big challenge and very rewarding. These were nights where we’d pick a film and then add our own score culled from our collections whilst still trying to maintain the dialogue of the film – they’ll always stand out in my mind as special nights ... Frigid at the Dendy became a real social event.”

The first incarnation of *Cyclic Defrost* was born of the Dendy during this period. Seb elabo-

Neil Sparkes And The Last Tribe
‘Achtung Salaam’
(2 Kool)
Eastern style live reggae house soaked in strings and percussion, served on a bed of killer bassline..

Missy Elliot
‘Get Ur Freak On’
(Universal)
A truly historic moment in pop – this tune (along with countless bootleg remixes) shook the world and Frigid was no exception....

Prop
‘Magnetic Highway/Remora’
(Silent)
I first heard this played live at Frigid and it pinned me to the wall – post millennial motoric madness from one of Sydney’s finest groups

The Left Banke
‘Dark Is The Bark’
(Smash)
A slice of dark yet dreamy psych-pop from New York’s answer to the Beach Boys

Minotaur Shock
‘Motoring Britain Caravan Of Courage’ (Blue States Mix)
(Melodic)
Gentle, pastoral folktronica in swing time – mixes so sweetly with the Left Banke I can’t have one without the other.

Gescom
‘Go Sheep’
(Clear)
The Clear label could do no wrong for a while there – R.I.P

Trinity
‘3 Piece Suit’
(Belmont)
A late 70’s reggae classic – I’ll always remember Ras Ronnie and Ras Iyah tearing it up over the version at the first ‘Version Excursion’ night at the Hopetoun ... ‘rewind me selecta!’

rates, ‘Luke and I were both working at the university at the time and Dale [Prince Valium] had taken over doing our flyers from Bernard. Dale and I had worked together on the university newspaper several years before and were old mates from going to raves back in 1991/2. We thought that making a simple photocopy magazine would help us get a bit more information out to our punters because there were all these people coming along and leaving without ever really finding out about a lot of the music we were playing, the guest acts, or the history behind some of the film choices. The first issue was preceded by a survey we handed out at Frigid’s first birthday party – a riotous affair with a birthday cake that had everyone unable to walk. A few months later we were posting copies of the magazine to over 600 addresses across Sydney and printing up more to hand out at the club. *Cyclic* in its original form lasted 15 issues and remains archived on the web where it still gets a surprisingly large amount of traffic’.

By the end of 1997 the Dendy was going very smoothly and Frigid organised a New Year’s Eve event in conjunction with Gemma and Seymour Butz called Dung. It was an incredible night which probably changed things for the worse...Well over the legal capacity crammed into the venue for two rooms of crazy music ending in a remarkable three-way back to back set between all three Frigid DJs mixing across a palette of early 90s sounds. Luke continues, “[Dung] turned out to be the blueprint for what the Dendy has now become ... promoters were suddenly asking ‘Wow, where did you guys find this venue – its amazing’ and from that point on the venue management were inundated with requests to do Saturday night allnighters. By the end of 1998 the Dendy changed management. The new bar manager pushed towards turning the venue into a proper club and told us ‘You know, you guys could have a really successful little night here if you just played some more top40 stuff.’ It was definitely time to leave.”

THE GLOBE

In 1999 Frigid moved to the Newtown Globe. A two level band venue plagued by noise problems it was managed by the ever friendly Mark Lambert (later of the Newtown RSL). The Globe provided an opportunity for us to reunite with our sound guy from Kinselas, Richard Austin (formerly of Raised By Wolves). The Globe’s two floors took a while to get started but the extra space and the passing Newtown crowd allowed Frigid to blossom into a pretty diverse live music night. There were big events with Elefant Traks and touring internationals including Tom Middleton, Neotropic, Cylob, Baby Ford, and Mike Dred from Rephlex, and an amazing spoken word/film night with Kodwo Eshun.

FRIGID NOW – THE HOPETOUN

Frigid moved to the Hopetoun in early 2000 after hosting a night at the Sydney Festival in January at the Opera House. Again a new beginning for Frigid, the last two years have seen Frigid slowly adjust to the smaller, more intimate space of the Hopetoun. As Frigid’s reputation overseas has grown there have been more internationals coming through, perhaps reaching its peak with the Squarepusher 5th birthday in 2001.

But that’s a story for another issue.

Or perhaps the web – The Frigid History, including the Hopetoun Years and the Globe times will be continued at cyclicdefrost.com. There you will also find top 5s from Sub Bass Snarl, Kid Calmdown, Prince Valium, Sleepy Robot, Clark Nova and Ollo



Palmskin Productions
‘Beethoven Street’
(Hut)
A Cryo classic – drift off gently on a stream of cello and piano – just sublime...

Dr. Octagon
‘Blue Flowers’ (Prince Paul Remix)
(Mo Wax)
Yes Chad, they’re growing by the purple pond.

Funky Porcini
‘Dubble’
(Ninja Tune)
A Kinselas era smoked-out classic.

Ed O.G And Da Bulldogs
‘I Got To Have It’
(Pwl)
Early 90’s hip hop will always have a seat at the Frigid musical table.

Masta Ace Inc.
‘Slaughterhouse’
(Delicious)
“murder, murder, murder...and kill, kill, kill!!!!”

Yabby U
‘Conquering Lion’ (Smith And Mighty Remix)
(Select Cuts)
Big tune alert! The Prophet meets Bristol’s finest bass-heads inna dubwise break off – done with the right balance of respect for the spirit of the original tune and a determination to take reggae into new spheres – a masterful homage...

Tooth
‘Dreamland’ (Wake Up Danny Mix)
(Cryogenesis)
A self-indulgent choice maybe – but this song was written with Frigid in my heart and mind and will always bring back the sweetest memories of happy Sunday nights surrounded by wonderful friends...

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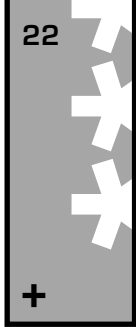
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Commodore 64 Sound

by Barry Handler

REMEMBERING 8-BIT

Back in the mid 80s, The Commodore64 computer was the dream item on every pre-pubescent boy's (and many girl's) Christmas list. Once unwrapped and firmly planted in front of the family TV, this little beige box was the tool responsible for sparking the imaginations of ten-year-olds around the world. Now it was possible to see Samantha Fox's body in glorious 8-bit colour before she converted to Christianity; be an ancient Ninja Warrior, fly a World War II bomber, as well as an enormous amount of other scenarios - all from this revolutionary little machine with only 64kb of memory. Unlike other home computers of the mid 1980s, an enormous number of C64 games stood out for the striking quality and original nature of sound effects and music. Although quite crude initially, gradually the quality of in-game sound effects and music improved, and composers such as Rob Hubbard, Martin Galway, David Galway and Ben Daglish began to push the boundaries of what was possible with the early sound hardware. The MOS6581 SID-chip, a three-voice subtractive synthesizer with proper filters and variable amplitude, was the chip responsible for the distinctive C64 music that was, and still is, loved by so many. By scouring numerous fan web-sites of this revolutionary home computer, it becomes quite obvious that the majority of its users remember most vividly how affected they were at the time by the captivating game soundtracks since until that point, the most that could be squeezed out of home computers and game machines were singular blips and simple melodies.



In 2000, Zombie Nation had a massive hit with *Kernkraft 400*, a tune that utilises the main melody from David Whittaker's theme for the game *Lazy Jones* (Terminal Software, 1984). Labels such as Beige Records, Erkrankung Durch Musique, Enduro Disks, and Monotonik, have all released products which they hope will both expose the sounds from the C64's past, and present them in a manner which is relevant to electronic music as it currently stands. Similarly, Elektron Industries' SIDStation is a completely new synthesiser that uses the actual MOS6581 SID chip. Elektron Industries have repackaged the tiny sound processor within a midi-enabled drum-machine styled case, complete with real-time control functions. Other hardware projects based around the SID chip include Hard Software's Hard SID card for PC computers, and the SIDsyn, which is similar in nature to the SIDStation. Audio software developers reFX have also recently released the QuadraSID 6581 VST instrument, which enables Cubase and users of a vast array of computer-based sequencers and soft-synths to incorporate the sounds of the 6581 chip into their music.

Barry Handler sent emails to a number of people active in today's electronic music scene who still hold the sensibilities and the memory of the old 6581SID sounds close to their hearts, and who still attempt to incorporate some of these sounds into their work, about their experiences.



THE 8-BIT CONSTRUCTION SET
www.beigerecords.com

The 8-Bit Construction Set is DJ Cougar Shuttle and Rick Stryker. They have recently had a 12" released on Beige Records (BEG-004), and forthcoming is the *Bodenstandig in America* 10" (BEG-005) featuring both the 8 Bit Construction Set and also Bodenstandig 2000.

CD: What was it about the C64's music that made it so special?
DJCS: The sound of the SID chip, the way that it's controlled and the fact that millions of people had high-quality synthesizers in their homes.
RS: Yeah, the implementation of a dedicated sound chip in a home computer system was rare at that time.

CD : Do you think the sounds of the C64's SID chip are still relevant today?
RS: What is still relevant today is the process of creating music on a C64, i.e. assembly language/tracking/low level control and communication with the machine. Now everything is hidden behind Flash 5 timelines and VST plug-ins and whatnot, and people fail to understand the aesthetics of the very medium within which they work. They are con-

trolled by corporate software, and the DIY spirit of investigation and learning about computers that existed so much within the early home-computer scene is all but gone.
DJCS: Ask the 2000+ people who bought the first record - yes. And it will become more relevant.

CD : What was your favourite C64 game tune?
DJCS : *Aztec Challenge*, followed by the "Mystery" demo on Music Maker.
RS: Hard to pick. I'm a Rob Hubbard fan (of course) and particularly like *Crazy Comets* and *International Karate*. The tunes for *Last Ninja 2* (Matt Gray) are also awesome...some tunes that never get mentioned which I really like are *Legacy of the Ancients* and *Epyx Super Cycle* (classic Epyx sound – I don't know the authors).

CD : How much of an inspiration was the old game music from C64 days?
DJCS : Some of the old game music is pretty bad. Some of it's great. What's inspiring is the way that the programmer/musician has to understand the machine - the 6502, the SID - to write the music. The features and limitations created a unique style of composition impossible in other media.
RS: Yes, the imagination of the good game composers who were forced to be as creative as possible within the constraints of their technology is an obvious influence, but what was more inspiring for this record were the machines themselves and the way in which they were asked to be used. You have to remember that the first thing a person ever saw when they booted up their C64 or Atari 800xl was the BASIC command line. If you take a step back and think that the built-in interface to the machine was an actual programming language, it's so much more conceptually attractive and computationally efficient than today's Windows crap...asking the user to use and understand the computer instead of being used by the interface or suckered into clicking on 'sign up for AOL' icons.

There are a number of records out now that are trying to capitalize on the sound of the SID or the nostalgia of that period without really understanding what they're doing...like there's some big C64 record that uses SIDStations and other 8-bit style records that are just samples and people messing about in Pro Tools or something. To us, these records are very fake and only deal with the surface of the time and are not very interesting. The 8-Bit Construction Set record doesn't care about surface for its own sake, it just cares about being true to yourself and your machines.



Interviews with the following artists can be found online at www.cycledefrost.com

Bodenstandig 2000
Dragan Espenschied is one half of Bodenstandig 2000, whose album Maxi German Rave Blast Hits 3 was released on Rephlex.

Elektron
Elektron is an electronic synthesizer developer established in Gothenburg in 1998, and they manufactured the SIDStation synthesizer which presents the original C64 sound chip in a new midi capable box with tweakable controls and a powerful operating system. Daniel from Elektron speaks.

Bochum Welt
Gianluigi Di Costanzo has recorded as Bochum Welt for many different labels including Rephlex, Hymen, Sony Music Japan, Darla, and is also working for Thomas Dolby's Beatnik Inc.

8-Bit Rockers
Finnish producer Sami records as '8-Bit Rockers' and has a 12" on Bunker Records.

Vim!
Keith Baylis records as Vim!, and has had numerous releases on net-label Monotonik as well as a full-length album, Linden : Home Of The Hits on Australian label Surgery Records

Sub Bass Snarl
Luke Dearnley is one half of Sub Bass Snarl.

Téli Sándor [Hard Software]
Téli Sándor has recently released a hardware card for PC computers called the 'HardSID'

Couchblip
www.couchblip.com
Luke Killen and Melinda Taylor record as Disjunction Reunion and Robokoneko respectively for the Australian label Couchblip.



by Sebastian Chan

AUSTRALIAN ELECTRONIC LISTENING MUSIC

Ten years later, and successfully turned into an acronym – IDM, it lives on. Where early music in this broad genre was influenced by basic electronics, the sounds of mid-late 1980s Detroit techno, Kraftwerk, and classic electro, towards the late 1990s IDM's second-wave emerged. Led by Autechre's influential third album *Chiasmatic Slide*, Squarepusher's *Feed Me Weird Things*, continuing hyper-rhythms from Aphex Twin and crossbled from jungle and drum & bass, the second wave of IDM moved away from the serenity and cleanliness of earlier works, utilising the newly available software synthesisers and, later, DSP effects.

In Australia it is works by Aphex Twin, Autechre, and Squarepusher that have been the most influential. These are all artists who had their most innovative years somewhere in the mid-1990s. Warp, Rephlex and the many related labels and artists that followed had a broad influence across Australia and by the end of the 1990s several Australian labels had sprung up to support a new field of artists inspired by those mid-90s sounds.

Aural Industries is a Sydney-based label that established itself in 1998 and began by signing Adelaide producer Tim Koch under the alias Thug. John Bus, who runs the label explains, "Back when I set it up in 1998 there weren't as many micro-labels around and certainly none in this country. We operate in a niche market which is probably the major factor why the label is now fully self-funded and has survived, as we can't compete with the majors in terms of marketing, market saturation or economies of scale. The bloatedness of the current music industry, along with the internet, allows niche players like Aural Industries to become quite successful, and being based in Australia is not as big a problem nowadays as it was ten years ago. The world has become a smaller place with much cheaper and faster, sometimes instantaneous communication between far-flung places. The recent *Thug:Remixed* CD which started life as an idea I had to provide the elements, up on the Aural Industries web site, necessary to remix five tracks. Remixes came in from Finland, Sweden, NZ, USA, Canada as well as Australia. Now the internet plays a vital role in allowing the label to communicate directly with artists and other labels in far off countries. It's also important in terms of getting information about our releases out there and obtaining overseas sales . . . [especially as] Australia only accounts for a small part of the sales, which just comes down to the small size of the population here." Interestingly Aural Industries' two key signings are both based interstate with Thug in Adelaide and Sense in Melbourne. "It's a hard slog and working with artists from other Australian cities means that the profile of the Aural Industries through live performances is somewhat lacking – it costs a lot to bring them to Sydney and the Sydney scene for this type of music is quite small. The

1999
Thug
Isolated Rhythm Chock

2000
Tim Koch
*Please Don't Tell Me That's
Your Volvo*

2001
Sense
Fourier Transformations

Sense
Goodbye Mr Henderson EP

2002
Various
Thug:Remixed

Various
*Please Don't Tell Me That's
Your Remix*

Despite living in Adelaide, Tim Koch has managed not only to run Surgery on a global scale but also release his own music on many overseas labels and even start up a new label in collaboration with a US-based friend. Internet friendships play a large part in the behind the scenes dealings with this sort of electronic music. “ It can be difficult living so far from the market where this style of music thrives and has a healthy scene, like in Europe or to a lesser extent in the USA, but I guess it is just about putting the feelers out and

‘[Back in Australia], there really isn’t enough support locally in Adelaide to hold regular nights that are themed around more unusual electronic music. At this stage Melbourne probably has the most healthy scene in that respect. [And despite the silent computer nerd stereotype] live gigs are still sometimes the best form of promotion in that people who like what they hear can usually buy material at a gig and talk to the artists first hand.”

2000

Various Artists
Initial Release

Super Science
Love Like Life In Miniature

2001

Modula
Audio Dismantle

Aspen
Are You That Retail Snob

Pretty Boy Crossover
The Building And Formation

Vim!
Linden – Home Of The Hits

2002

Various Artists
*2002AD Analogue To Digital /
Adelaide Fringe Festival Samp*

Qua
Forgetabout

Epoq
Scintilla

“The major difficulty I find [with being in Australia] is that it costs a

fortune to get your stock to distributors and as a small label we can sometimes spend as much money on postage as we do on the actual CD production run. It's also hard as you can't tour to your major market in Europe. We obtained distribution deals in Japan, UK and the US over the internet and we make a large proportion of sales through our own online shop as well. About 70% of CDs we sell go overseas and the majority of our press to date has also been internet based." As for Surgery and Aural Industries, the local scene is not strong enough alone. " In Sydney at the moment the live scene is not as good as it could be. Without places like Frigid and Drop, you could almost say the live scene is dead. However there are a few things on the margins - Disjunction Reunion played an interesting gig the other week at Speak Easy in Erskine Street in the city which runs every month. This night has been described as a David Lynch-ian musical event with acts ranging from folk music, Bulgarian music, punk improvisation and noise, and electronic music. It was a fantastic night and good to see quite a different and diverse regular event springing up in the city."

2001 _____
Various
Couchblip!

Disjunction Reunion
Computer Dead Reckoning


Various
Other Animals

2002 _____
Pellarin
Tangible Abstractions

Bloq
Life From the Outside

Robokoneko
TBD

*For mp3s from
the labels see
cyclicdefrost.com*

		<p>surgeon</p>
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aural industries



Montreal Rundown

Overseas profile

by Lucinda Catchlove

C'EST QUOI LE GLITCH ESTI?

It's always tempting – especially for music journalists, fans and those on the business end of music – to place the creative output of a geographical or aesthetic community into a neat little consumable package or 'scene' ready for consumption. Dancing to architecture can seem easier when you develop a routine or adapt the moves you already know to 'solid' structures that fit a recognizable blueprint. And, although 'scenes' or 'communities' based around common aesthetic interests and geography might be easy to impose theory upon posthumously, while in motion human interactions and creativity are more fluid and abstract , even though creative synergy can make itself felt in the 'objects' or 'events' produced. In gathering information and opinions for this article, it became quickly apparent that Montreal's "experimental electronic" music output couldn't be snugly fit into a handy little niche like "glitch" and that most people resisted being categorized as such.

"I think it's more of a scene than a sound. The more interesting musicians in Montreal don't do just one thing," says Martin Dumais, head of Montreal based Haute Couture and HauteC labels and one half of Les Jardiniers. Rather than having one heterogeneous 'scene', Montreal's music community is formed of pockets of interests that sometimes overlap and artists who indulge in multiple approaches to music making and work in a number of different 'scenes'. Someone who makes 'dance' music is just as likely to make 'art' or 'experimental' music.

"Most people in our entourage call it techno or house. Minimal is something you will hear but not 'micro glitch bionic whatever'," explains Dumais. As is probably true of musicians across the globe, local artists would rather leave the name calling to journalists, publicists and fans. Akufen (AKA Marc Leclair) is one of Montreal's more established producers; his release *My Way* on Force Inc has helped bring the local experimental 'dance' music scene to global prominence. "The technology I see more as a tool than an issue really. We're talking about electronic music but more and more I tend to just talk about 'music'. I don't want to talk about electronic music, only the tools are electronic." Many artists in Montreal feel the same way. For instance, Mitchell Akiyama who runs the Intr_version label and works as an artist in both audio and visual mediums does work that integrates digital and electro-acoustic means and aesthetics. He sees himself equally, if not more, aligned with the experimental post-rock scene, "What I do can definitely be considered electronic music but its function, the way it's made and its purpose is a little bit more organic."

"I find it ironic that the term glitch has become a genre within itself," says Jon Berry of Force Inc who moved the label's North American office to Montreal from New York. Force Inc has released records by Montreal producers Akufen and Jetone (AKA Tim Hecker),



akufen, photo by Marjse Lantier

or out to try to push some new variable. They're never seemingly satisfied with staying in one area; they're really trying to push the notions of whatever they're working in. I don't find it very trendy, it's almost like anti-trend. The reason I appreciate working for Force Inc is that the label has always tried to support those tendencies."

THE HOUSE THAT JACQUES BUILT

Montreal is a somewhat unique city in North America in the sense that it is a bilingual city in a predominantly French province on a predominantly English continent. "The location of the city is very strategic because the influence comes as much from the American side as the European. And the fact that it's a multicultural city means we have influences from all over the globe," says Akufen.

Montreal is a city of dualities and multiplicity, and this influences the city's creative dynamic and aesthetic. Both French and English universities have strong experimental music and digital art departments the intellectual and theoretical chin-stroking aspects of audio exploration are well represented and funded.

Conversely Montreal is also a huge disco city. During the 70s the city was part of the Studio 54 circuit and still boasts a strong connection to the US and international house and 'commercial' dance scenes through labels like Bombay and Turbo.

On the experimental hip-hop tip, Ninja Tune's North American offices are based here, as are world class turntablists Kid Koala and A-Trak. Martin Tetrault mines the outer extremes of turntable experimentalism and all these artists in some form use the 'cut and paste' and 'found sound' aesthetics attributed to 'glitch'.

On the post-rock spectrum – where the concepts of 'glitches', 'errors' and 'natural' sounds also play a part in the aesthetic – there is the community centered around Godspeed You Black Emperor, the Constellation, Alien8 and Substratif labels, and Casa Del Popolo. Located in the Mile End district of Montreal, Casa Del Popolo hosts everything from evenings of free jazz to bizarre electro and laptop experiments. You're as likely to see Akiyama, Dave

Kristian or part of the CocoSolidCiti crew at the Casa as you are at an event produced by the Mutek crew. And "rock" music – from industrial to trashy metal – also has an influence on many of the locals. Just check out Tim Hecker's dirty ode to Van Halen on his recent release 'my love is rotten to the core' (substratif) which proves that humour is appreciated even in the most 'arty' aspects of Montreal's electronic community.

"We loved Cabaret Voltaire, Throbbing Gristle, Chris & Cosey who were always beat-oriented," explains Martin Dumais. "I think when people figured out you could make experimental music and make people dance at the same time instead of having people sit down in awe or bored out of their skulls. I think that sort of shaped the sound. Montreal's always been a big dance city. I think that still prevails, even in the more experimental music by older musicians like Akufen. Akufen's music is partly experimental but if you take out the samples it's basically Todd Terry. Marc knows how to make a good groove and add layers that make it more interesting than just basic house. I don't think he'd be ashamed of it."

Akufen's agenda bridges the city's dialectic. "I want them to shake their ass and think at the same time, it's very important you know. You've got to stimulate both ends." Ghislain Poirier, one of Montreal's younger musicians who releases with New York's 12K, Montreal's Intr_version, and is a French language music journalist, agrees. "Experimental music and music for dancefloors can go together. You always have to pay attention for purist who wants to block bridges and stop us from experimenting. Music must stay music... It's a free thing which floats and we each immortalize it in our own fashion... The 'dance' scene is very important and the experimental scene is also, and on both sides there are good things and crap..."

CONCRETE DANCEFLOORS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS

It'd be irresponsible to talk about 'glitch' and what it means in Montreal without taking off the gloves to sift through some of the city's history of dirty, experimental music in the non-digital realms. Montreal has a pretty solid history of experimental music and interest in subverting and converting new and old technologies to aesthetic ends. FIVA (Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville AKA "Victo") is a festival dedicated to the less digital side of experimentation booking artists like Sonic Youth, I8U and The Necks as well as local artists of note. ACREQ (l'Association pour la création et la recherche électroacoustiques du Québec) has been around for 23 years. In the past couple of years ACREQ has broadened their mandate to include digital experimentation and their yearly Elektra festival books acts like Oval and Granular Synthesis. For artists interested in making music that pushes the boundaries of categorization, Montreal offers a wealth of opportunities. It can be easily argued that the aesthetics of musique concrète have influenced the 'glitchiness' of music that comes out of Montreal, or local artists willingness to explore ambient and 'found' sounds, as much as any contemporary global movement towards this aesthetic.

The increasing critical and practical success of local artists and labels has much to do with balancing out global ambitions and connections to a larger international community – taking care of the macrocosm as well as the microcosm. And in some ways – the emphasis on the 'small' details as well as the larger compositional picture – this can be felt in the music. These beliefs have helped to create an infrastructure of labels and festivals that have brought Montreal and Montreal based artists a certain amount of international attention. Montreal is certainly not the hub of the music industry, our festivals focus on the

artistic side of music and digital technologies along with some shaking of 'bonbons'. The rise of Montreal's creative community has much to do with local investment in community by both individuals and the government, a DIY aesthetic and local artists' willingness to share contacts and resources with both other locals and on an international level.

The effect of international festivals based in Montreal on both the production and dissemination of local artists and labels cannot be underestimated. Alain Mangeau who curates Mutek alongside Eric Mattson says, "I think it probably points to the fact that Mutek created a context for something to happen and that context kind of provided a convergence point for some artists to get their act together to start with." He sees international festivals which support local artists and bring together international artists with converging aesthetics as a form of positive globalism that strengthens local creative communities and international exchange. "I do believe that for an art form as marginal as say the electronic music we promote, globalization is a way out instead of dealing only with a very small niche market here. Mutek for instance addresses publics across continents so there is that sense of hope that is linked to the easiness of communications today."

As to whether Montreal has a 'sound', Mangeau thinks it's a bit too soon to say. "I think within a few years we are going to see something that will be associated with a certain sound from Montreal but I'm far from certain that it's going to be glitch. On the contrary, I think it's going to be much closer to an evolved form of tech house because of the sensibility there is in Montreal. Everything's pointing in that direction and someone like Akufen is probably showing the way, and not just in Montreal but in a more global way." Though there are certainly some 'scenes' that tend towards hermeticism, current local tendencies seem to indicate that there'll be increasing collaborations and cross-pollination between both digital and acoustic mediums and aes-



Ghislain Poirier, photo by Eliot Brunelle

thetics in Montreal. Local post-rock musicians are increasingly experimenting with laptops and laptop artists want to get their fingers dirty and indulge in a little sonic pollution. Akiyama says, "I get the feeling that the whole lone producer/DJ thing won't hold up because it seems like everyone I know has started to collaborate or at least preach the values of collaboration."

Berry thinks there's an international trend afoot as well as a local one. "I think everyone in electronic music is looking for the next change, the next big thing. Who knows what will happen, the reality is there's a lot of great music that hasn't even been tapped into yet. I think a big part of how those elements come into place will be through the aspect of melody, looking at it as songs rather than tracks. Everyone's talking about humanity and bitching about the laptop live show, realistically maybe everyone's looking for something to identify with." Identity, as any Quebecker who grew up on local politics and cultural debate knows, is constantly evolving as the past interacts with the present to create a potential future. Not surprisingly the 'identity' of Montreal's electronic music community is as polymorphic as the diverse range of people and cultures that compose the city itself.

LP Sleeve Design

by Alex Crowfoot

COVERING THE COVERS

Some of the best musical experiences have been listening to a new record while poring over its creative accompaniment, the sleeve. It could be the added depth of conceptual artwork, or it could just be a beautifully crafted object. If the designer is particularly particular, it can border on the fetishistic. Colour, texture and text; embossing, die cuts, special inks, choice of paper stock, imagery, and some great ideas add up to something worth owning. Adding to the musical experience in this way is much easier with vinyl releases. The bigger canvas makes for a greater visual impact. The best sleeves can be enjoyed again and again, much like the music itself. And many musicians, either through collaboration with designers or by designing for themselves, communicate visually as well as through sound. And with electronic music often the only way to get a less abstract impression of where an artist is coming from, interviews aside, is through the sleeve.

Contemporary music history is littered with stories of design and music collaboration. Of course it is partially about the service of selling products, making one album or cd stand out from the others in the racks at the record shop, but there is a growing appreciation of design that is pushing into the territory of art. This is acknowledged by Sound Design, an exhibition of British music industry design which is currently touring the world featuring the work of 15 designers including Peter Saville, Malcolm Garrett, Jamie Reid, Neville Brody, Intro Design, Ian Anderson, Vaughan Oliver, and Mark Farrow.

Sleeve design and design aesthetic is often a large part of an artist or label's collectability. Not only are the British and American pressings of many labels sought after for the quality of their vinyl, but often the quality of their artwork is higher, too. For instance, the Australian release through the local licensee Festival Records of New Order's *Confusion* (1983) lacked the embossing on the sleeve and similarly the release of *Blue Monday* (1984) was minus the die-cut. The Peter Saville/New Order relationship has been long lasting, and has a rich history. Saville's sleeves enhance the experience, both intellectually and visually. Around 1983, both New Order's music and Saville's designs were minimal yet complex, and to some degree futuristic. There was not a lot of written information, but the sleeve design spoke volumes. In the case of Confusion it seemed the band had bought a production style by working with seminal New York electro Arthur Baker (*Planet Rock*) that did not quite fit with the rest of their work of the time. It was the sleeve managed to hold it together as one body of work.

Apart from Saville's designs there was not much minimal or modernist design work around in Britain at the time. His interest in Russian Constructivist art was passed on to Factory Records seeking to make an impact in a post-punk scene. It was visually striking in the context, emerging from a period of the rough and ready style adopted

by punk and the highly stylised cut and paste work of Jamie Reid (Sex Pistols) and Saville's work for Factory worked in tandem with the label's aversion to using images of band members on their sleeves. Although New Order never gave him a design brief, this is just one of many examples of close design/music relationships. Buying 4AD records would have been very different without the designs of 23 Envelope (Vaughan Oliver and Chris Bigg), similarly Warp and Designers Republic, or even Me Company and Björk.

Famously, in the case of Factory, design can almost kill a label. As a 12" release *Blue Monday* was not expected to sell many copies, so it appear to matter that Saville's die cut sleeve meant that the label lost money on each copy. As it edged up the charts, however, there was not much celebrating in the Factory office and when it went to number one in the UK and became the best selling 12 of all time – a catastrophe. Even today, Saville continues to design all of New Order's record sleeves in thematic styles.

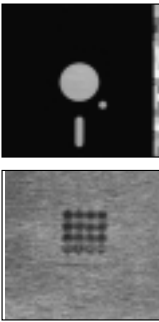
Sometimes design communicates an inferred set of values. I bought Meem's *Miffy & Yum Yum* album on the basis of its handmade wooden cover without thinking of listening first. The packaging is elaborate but unpretentious, showing a care and dedication to producing something special and unique.

Like Meem's use of wood, CDs

using uncoated board have a tactile richness absent in glossy or coated stocks, and even minimalist design takes on a new character on plain brown or grey board. For example the sleeve for Tortoise's self-titled debut. And New York-based designer Stephen Byram often uses uncoated board, combined with embossing, scratchy illustration and simple use of colour for labels such as Screwgun and Winter & Winter to match their avant garde content. So-called "undesigned" or "amateur" packaging also has a lot going for it now too. Whether it be a musician's doodles or Mr Scruff's cast of wonky cartoon characters or famously the UNKLE characters made by Nigo and Futura 2000 which have ended up being turned into highly fetishised and hyper-expensive figurines. And Neville Garrick's covers for Bob Marley are a famous example of covers that addressed racial politics and history congruent with the musician's intent, contributing to his mystique and iconic status along the way.

The advent of CDs meant new challenges for designers and this has arguably led to more creativity, especially in recent years, with a seemingly endless succession of new approaches to packaging the small silver disc. There is an even greater imperative to do this in an age of loss-free duplication and rampant CD burning. Record labels, however tiny, have to at least break even, and if they want to fund tours and further releases they must make money. Making the CD a special and desirable object means that they may actually sell some copies. No matter how inventive designers become, the trouble with MP3s is there is nothing to package – which is our loss. In contrast, the rise of the accessibility of music through downloads and the nature of major record labels means the humble 7 inch single has become a statement of independence, of belonging to an underground, of dedication and love of music. Ironic, considering that this format was once the volume seller, used as a marketing tool to boost album sales.

Over the coming months in Cyclic Defrost we will be looking at certain album cover designs and particular designers and 'reviewing' sleeve designs to bring to the fore the importance of the visual in a world of audio.



Pretty Boy Crossover

The Building And Formation

(Surgery Records, 2001)

Format – standard 5" CD

Designer – Ian Hamilton

Surgery is one of the few electronic labels in Australia that has a consistent identity. Each artist or release has a distinctive personality while retaining enough consistency to make the source clear. It is a clever balance. Some labels have a monolithic identity – it may be beautifully done but there is little variation between artists and it is designed to make the label instantly recognisable.

The Surgery logo is a fine piece of design, a modernist word mark that is not instantly readable, reflecting the more experimental nature of their releases. To me it also looks sliced up, like a typeface after surgery, a second communication of the name.

Consistent use of a sans serif typeface for the artist name and release title adds a second layer of consistency. The background imagery is where artist individuality gets communicated, and what a diverse bunch they are. From the delicately veined, high contrast organic leaf image used for Pretty Boy Crossover, the abstract pastel morph of Super Science's *Love Like Life in Miniature* and the straightforward shot of a mundane northern English corner shop on Vim's *Linden – Home of the Hits*. The twin messages conveyed are of quality control – this label is not going to be releasing any old stuff their mates' have knocked up on the computer. And artistic freedom – showing the diversity amongst their stable of artists which will keep the listener interested for the long haul.



New Order

Confusion

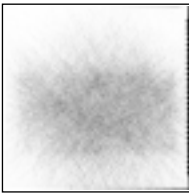
(Factory Records, 1983)

Format – 12" (local pressing)

Designer – Peter Saville

This is the unembossed Australian release of the Confusion twelve inch, sadly my copy of the embossed UK pressing was purged in a moment of temporary insanity. Unlike much of the work of his contemporary, Neville Brody, many of Peter Saville's designs of this period have travelled well. It could have been released yesterday. This is partly due to his more restrained typography. Brody designed a lot of his own typefaces which have become closely associated with early Eighties design. This sleeve also predates the recent obsession with faux-naïve super-chunky pixels by about 20 years. Interestingly it has some visual echoes of Dutch artist Piet Mondrian, especially his work *Broadway Boogie Woogie*. I'm not sure if this was intentional but it's highly appropriate. It was Mondrian's response to encountering the excitement of New York for the first time – the home of the record's highly distinctive producer, Arthur Baker.

Saville has "confused" the track title and band name by combining them in one line, the only instantly readable letter being "F", presumably for Factory. Each shape is a fusion of two letters. Sometimes the grey shapes read as a character in the band name, sometimes the track title, sometimes neither. Yet it remains readable, or at least decipherable. That takes a lot of skill. It was this line of blocky type that was embossed on the UK version. The large 93 in the background is the catalogue number. The colour bar in the top right hand corner is the colour coding which also represents the catalogue number. A colour wheel on the reverse of the album released shortly afterwards *Power, Corruption and Lies* offered the solution to the code. And this similar colour code design was used on the next single of the period, 'Blue Monday' with its computer floppy disk design.



Richard Devine

Lipswitch

(Warp Records, 2001)

Format – 12" (UK pressing)

Designer – Designers Republic

It's rare that you see a sleeve design that looks unlike anything else you've ever seen, but this Designers Republic sleeve is one of them. From the most influential design studio of the last decade, it is a sleeve that has also been oddly criticised for 'lack of design' by others. The fine lines which make up the cover image could only have been done by a designer who knows how far you can go with print, and how to get the best out of a printer. They really are extremely fine lines – so narrow and precise. But aside from that it's a beautiful image that manages to create something very organic from an obviously digital source. This fits perfectly with a music that is similarly abstract, intricate highly digitally processed and generated. The only mismatch is that the music feels a lot heavier than the design.

Designers Republic have been said to occasionally design about design, something they do here to a degree. The reverse of the cover consists of a numbered content listing "Items Used". The first three of these items tell us how many lines of each in the three spot colours appear on the front. Next we are told the size, weight and colour of the board used to make the sleeve, before we are told that there is also "2 x 300mm o black vinyl." At item 6 we reach the artist's name and the title, before a track listing. The remaining 60 lines contain one word or punctuation mark each which list the production and publishing credits, label details, catalogue number. Item 63 is the bar code. An interesting piece of design deconstruction that manages to remain functional?

The choice of monospaced industrial informational typeface reminiscent of those used on architectural plans adds to the functional feel. Monospaced typefaces hark back to typewriters, on which it was not possible to adjust the amount of kerning – each character had the same amount of space between letters. A "w" would fill this space but an "i" would have gaps either side. The inner sleeves are a plain varnished white stock with no type or imagery. The label follows though on the sleeve design, with a circular clump of fine lines, and yes, we are told how many there are.

One last detail too. Both edges of the open end of the sleeve have an immaculate corrugated die cut out of the edge, making the removal of the vinyl from the sleeve a tactile experience.

REVIEWS

7"’s/12"’s
Jonny Phive/Lowrion
Musique Tranquille Split 12" (Mofonics)

It’s lovely to see a local release appear on vinyl with such spectacular and effective cover art. Musique Tranquille is the first in a series of local instrumental hip hop 12"’s to be put out by the Mofonics crew who are party designers, part b-boys, and part promoters. On the first of the series, Jonny Phive drops three tracks and let’s skip straight to the third, Oceanic Jazz. Oceanic Jazz was initially released on our own label, Cryogenesis Recordings back in 1999 as part of a limited edition 3" cd series. Now, on vinyl and remastered its simplicity – a descending piano line, a dusty horn, and a sultry female spoken word sample - still make it a standout track of slow circa-1995 MoWax instrumentalism. The other track Inner Universe is almost like a re-version of Oceanic Jazz carrying a different piano, horn and vocal sample; and Concrete #1, a maniacal and amusing cut up condensing bits of almost all of Jonny Phive’s debut album of last year into a two minute mash-up. On the flip, Lowrion drops three similarly mellow cuts. Sit Back slips a little too easily into the background with a melodic synth line playing against some deft scratching, while Massive 97 is all ambient space-age 90bpm breakbeat with glistening synth. The third track is, like the other side, a cut up track Concrete, and is the standout on this side if only for its dj-trick usability. All up this split 12" is a release that sounds like it is straight outta the mid-90s - straightforward slowcore break-beat. **Sebastian Chan**

Hrvatski
Raume (Tonschacht)
A-Side ‘Bad Raum’ is a rhythmic hyper programmed piece that recalls the percussion programming of Hrvatski’s previous LP *Oiuseux*. Minor key vacuum cleaner chords are paired with nice warm bass line and filtered kitchen cupboard door creaking percussion rushes.

The B-Side continues in the kitchen sounds vein – with ‘Eintrag Raum’ consisting of microwave beeps and blender drones mixed with mixing bowl hits and other assorted kitchen implements. This track flows into ‘Kochen Raum’ which builds some simple synth arpeggios over the aforementioned kitchen drum collages. Overall a very interesting 7" from Hrvatski and on love-ly 180 gram black vinyl! Also keep an ear out for his Planet u album soon. **Barry Handler**

Jonathan Svard
1,2,3 (Irritant)
This clear vinyl single opens with sombre church organ tones that give way to filtered staccato beats and tinkering piano accompaniment. A more biting, almost distorted beat arises and then more organ musings are sprinkled over the mix – the side concludes with an overdriven chord sequence with more piano tinkering.

The flip-side is an energetic piece with micro sample distorted beat workout with evil musicbox chiming melodies layered ontop. The track unfolds with almost square wave leads and manic micro hi hats. This side closes with an 8-bit console gone hay-wire static beat piece, almost like Mario had one too many bad mushrooms. **Barry Handler**

CDs
Epoq
Scintilla (Surgery)

Epoq is Sydney-based music student Jonathan Gage, who creates a bizarrely unsettling form of IDM. The elements are the familiar synth pads and programmed drums (with occasional sampled voices), but nothing sits quite right: the time signatures are either very odd or just change all the time, and the beats don’t necessarily match up with the other sounds. But you get the sense that it’s impeccably constructed – it doesn’t sound random, just somewhat disturbed. It has the ambience of early Aphex Twin or Global Communication, but it’s filtered through something Other. It’s also very well produced, with plenty of thought put into the spatial aspects, making for a fully immersive alien experience. Very cool stuff indeed. A considerable number of mp3s are available for download via his website. **Peter Hollo**

Qua
forgetabout (Surgery)
Cornel Wilczek has a background in design, and he is responsible for the beautiful cover to the Qua album as well as the music. This is, with some misgivings, one of the most exciting local releases I’ve heard since the Pretty Boy Crossover album. Qua’s music belongs firmly in the growing borderland between analogue and digital, using acoustic instruments and found sounds but treating them with granular synthesis techniques and glitchy cut-ups, and sitting them alongside electronic sounds. Qua is to some extent following in the footsteps of overseas groups like

Dntel, Kim Hiorthøy, Matmos, Savath + Savalas or even Christian Fennesz; and one does get the sense of the ghost of Mouse on Mars’ squelchy organs overly infecting some of these tracks. Nevertheless, Qua’s music is all his own, in the way the disparate elements are brought together. Some of the sounds are truly delicious – strumming acoustic guitar, crunchy textures... Occasionally something enters that’s just a bit jarring – like the slide guitars at the beginning of ‘duet for guitar and fridge’, or the use of crappy drum machines. ‘800x600’ transforms from an unpromising drum-machinic beginning into a very satisfying distorted clatter. The crackly ‘sys_environment’ is completely spot-on, as is the evocative ‘the air is thin in here’. With forgetabout, Qua has brought a new level of craftsmanship to Australian electronica. **Peter Hollo**

Various Artists
Masonic (Hymen/Ant-Zen)
The new double CD and rather lovely quadruple-vinyl compilation masonic, on Ant-Zen/Hymen features most of the Hymen stable and contains a lot of what I’d consider dross – repetitive dark ambient or dark acid stuff. Hymen superstars Beefcake contribute a characteristically funky and fucked up number (with gross-out soulful female vocals getting sent through the shredder), and it’s great to see a number of Australians sitting among some quite well-known international acts: alongside Funkstörung, Scorn and Venetian Snares, we have Xingu Hill (a loping beat and nice atmospheric making it one of my favourites), and also a collaboration between David Thrussell and Darrin Verhagen as So Fuckin’ Jazz (a kind of weirdly attenuated melodramatic soundtrack music). Lilienthal’s skittering melodic track hero anthem, Xanopticon’s manic hardcore drum’n’bass and k_chico’s splendid slide-guitar-and-glitch-beats also deserve a mention, as does Red Sparrow’s ‘Les Arbres’ (more pretty skitteriness, this time from France). Fanny closes the second disc with schizophrenic hardcore drum’n’bass. The trouble with a comp of this length (two jammed-full CDs, 30 tracks in total) is that there’s a danger of losing concentration somewhere in the middle, especially if a few tracks aren’t to your taste. **Peter Hollo**

particular reviewers and go and seek out new music they recommend because you trust their judgement. Of course, you’ll disagree with some reviews and reviewers but that’s all part of the fun. And, finally, some may ask, ‘why are there no negative reviews?’. The short answer to this is that we don’t like to waste space and with the volume of new music appearing each week we don’t think we should waste your time or mindspace with trivialities.

Decoder Ring
Spooky Action At A Distance (Hello Cleveland)
Sydney 7-piece Decoder Ring’s debut EP is a mostly instrumental mix of Krautrock, indie rock, and even electronica. In these tracks we find instantly classic analogue keyboard lines jostling with loose rock drumming (and the occasional nicely-EQ’d & distorted breakbeats) – even live, when they’re much more rock, the keyboards are at least as important as the guitars and bass in this music. All five tracks are excellent, but highlights are the night shift, featuring the glorious vocals of Jodi Phillis (ex-Clouds/Dearhunters), and the huge keyboard glissandi in the big Krautrock number protein express (while a sampled voice repeats “and I’m all mixed up...”). **Peter Hollo**

Astrobotnia
Parts I, II, III (Rephlex/Inertia)
Astrobotnia is a new project from a secretive member of the Rephlex stable. It could be Aphex Twin but apparently its more likely to be Ovuca, from Finland. Regardless of who it is behind this project, the three Astrobotnia releases, two mini albums on CD and one 12" vinyl condense the early Aphex ambient atmospheric sound of Selected Ambient Works I, add chopped electro and loose breakbeat rhythms straight out of Luke Vibert’s sampler, and end up bringing much needed reinvigoration to the genres that Rephlex term ‘Braindance’ and others reckon is ‘intelligent dance music’ (IDM). In most circumstances ‘straight outta ’92’ would be a term of abuse but here it is a term of warm endearment. **Sebastian Chan**

Chris DeLuca & Peabird
Deadly Wiz Da Disko (K7/Creative Vibes)
Whilst one end of independent hip-hop revives authenticity in crate digging, lo-fi aesthetics, and abstract rhymes; the other pulls looks to digital technology for new hyper-rhythms and microscopically detailed hi-fi sound worlds. Half of Funkstörung, Chris DeLuca moves deeper into hip-hop territory with this latest album. Clipped, shredded voice samples are patterned into breakbeats; DJ cuts and spinbacks are emulated by DSP effects; syncopated beats snap with a mechanical precision; synth blurts are ruthlessly edited and cut short. Prefuse 73 and more recently Anti Pop

Consortium have been working developing this lap-top-age hip hop for the last few years and Funkstörung have themselves hinted at similar designs with their early remix for WuTang Clan and DeLuca’s robotindustrialfunk here fits a similar mould. Slightly disappointingly lyricwise there is nothing here to match DeLuca’s audio tricks on the beats except from Anti Pop Consortium’s inimitable Beans. **Sebastian Chan**

Various Artists
Bingo Beats II (Zed Bias mix) (Bingo/Inertia)
DJ Zinc runs the Bingo Beats label as a side project to his more familiar jump up drum & bass workouts. Nearly two years ago, Zinc’s 138 Trek was heralding a darker simpler breakbeat garage sound – a bleep driven step sequenced bassline, two thirds speed drum & bass drums, and not much else. It has appeared on virtually every 2-step and garage compilation since. This second compilation of Bingo Beats releases includes several new Zinc tracks (as Jamin) all of which are minor variations on the 138 Trek theme. More excitingly though, Zed Bias are on the mix. Before Zinc, Zed Bias have been putting out some excellent darker 2-step tracks for a few years now under various names and a host of crazy remixes. Their selections here are impeccable and showcase a rough, raw bass heavy sound. Standard dance-hall samples make a return on Naughty’s ‘Pussy Trak’ and The Henchmen’s ‘Ring The Alarm’ (both DJ Hype remixes) and it is the combination of rinsing basslines and jittery beats that make this worthwhile – particularly on Ras Kwame’s ‘Cum On’ and Artwerk’s ‘Red Ride’ a pushme-pullyou rhythm that surges forward over a relentless bass. Back in 1994 the SOUR label put out a seminal jump up compilation, Nu Skool Flava, and this Bingo Beats mix updates that very same sound. **Sebastian Chan**

RJD2
Dead Ringer (Def Jux)
New York label Def Jux headed by former Company Flow producer El-P usually pairs apocalyptic rhymes against equally ‘sturm und drang’ beats drained of funk. Cannibal Ox and El-P’s own recent solo project rain down nightmare tales of dysfunctional families and New York tearing itself apart in a way that makes Wu Tang’s overproduced fantasy worlds all the more ridiculous. So it is odd that the Ohio-based DJ-producer RJD2 would release such a



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REVIEWS

record as Dead Ringer on Def Jux. Like Anticon’s Jel and DJ Shadow, RJD2 is obsessed with trawling record bins for old rock, funk and soul form the 60s and early 70s and then recombining their elements into new structures. In fact, Dead Ringer shares a lot with Shadow. Drums covered in a thick layer of dust, offkilter guitar loops, and a cut & paste aesthetic that revels in the audible age and deterioration of the sample sources. And like Shadow, too, there is a very real awareness of song structure – even when there is no song, and a sense of narrative when there are no words. The few tracks with guest MCs feel as if they are there to please the hip hop fraternity, which is a bit frustrating but I guess that’s one of the limitations of being on a New York label – expectations. **Sebastian Chan**

Various

Barbeque Beats: Sunrise On A Rooftop in Brooklyn (theAgriculture)
Compiled and mixed by DJ Olive for his new theAgriculture imprint, Barbeque Beats: Sunrise On A Rooftop in Brooklyn captures the musical experimentation of a new grouping of likeminded artists. Suggesting a new sub-genre, Rooftop Music, *Barbeque Beats* also unveils what’s in store from theAgriculture in the coming year.

Focusing primarily on artists based in and around New York, this compilation features sounds from the likes of QPE (Quiet Personal Electronics, whose album is out on theAgriculture), producer whiz-kid Scotty Hard (who manned the desk and effects on the last Medeski, Martin And Wood albums), Once 11, long time junglist DJ Wally, Lloop and The Ladies Man (aka Raz Mesinai/Badawi). There’s a great deal of interesting sounds present here, with ‘Old Spice’ by The Ladies man and ‘Vaus’ by Sporangia being among the highlights. Lloop’s ‘Long Jumps’ is another magnificent piece of work. An inclusion from his soon to bereleased Warm album, it’s trickling pianos and soft pads give this track a discontented feel that definitely marks it as one of the stand out pieces on the record.

If there was a theme to this compilation then it surely ties back into the aesthetic that theAgriculture is propagating. Instead of this disc coming off as a record made to collectivize a group of musicians into a scene, *Barbeque Beats* more just sets up a space in which these artists can connect and potentially end up working alongside each other on various projects. TheAgriculture is essentially looking to establish a port or hub where musi-

cians and DJs producing leftfield electronic material and ambient works can find an outlet. *Barbeque Beats: Sunrise On A Rooftop in Brooklyn* is the first real effort from the label to establish links between this ever-growing collective of similarly minded musicians and from listening to the disc the experiment is indeed a success. **Lawrence English**

Various Artists

Communication Problems

(Vibragun)

The third release on Sydney based label Vibragun features both local and international sonic art creators. The double CD compilation is entitled *Communication Problems* and the printing on the packaging and the discs themselves echo the theme of compilations title with text and graphics scrambled all over the place. In fact one must refer to the website to get a decent picture of the track listing! <www.vibragun.com.au> An absolute wealth of sounds, styles and durations are waiting to be discovered here with tracks ranging in length from 14 seconds to nearly ten minutes. Tracks range in style from the dark drum n bass of Napalm Death’s ex-drummer Mick Harris to strange mutating morse code bleeping of Speedranch vs Jansky Noise, with things like the avant hip-hop of alleged Jungle Brothers’ muse Sensational in between. Then there are the downright bizarre tracks such as Chopper Read & The Blue Flames’ curious spoken word meets acid techno number.

Brisbane sound artist Andrew Kettle provides a curious 14 second short track – which I chose to listen to on repeat for a while to get the hang of it. However this caused me to think I was going mad as the track seemed to sound different each time through! Curious... Also appearing is Sydney’s Pimmon who gets in on the communication theme with a track reminiscent, at first, of morse code being played by a fog horn. Aussie sound art heavy weights Oren Ambarchi and Martin Ng deliver an enchanting drone/tone piece where timbres shift and twist cunningly. I must admit though that I have become completely enchanted by the track from Thomas Köner (aka Porter Ricks) which hints at beautiful voices floating amongst powerful fluttering subsonics. Plenum’s track amuses and confuses with its disembodied voice and his search for religion. Farmers Manual do their data sonification trick – raw data screams past your ears. A strong release from this young label bound to keep your ears surprised for some time. **Luke Dearnley**

UNRELEASED DEMOS

with the Peanut Spell ... check cyclicdefrost.com for mp3s from the demos below

Alf and Munk featuring Mirage and Ed Gee

Untitled

These lads have been on Sydney’s ‘drum’n’bass and anything in between’ circuit for quite some time. Joined at the Bass and Sonic Fiction should ring bells for many junglists, and their latest night ‘Airbourne’ happens on Sundays at V-Bar.

The crew has always stuck clear of producing angry tearout drum’n’bass, instead opting for the deep rollers. There always seems to be a big focus in drum’n’bass on the technical rather than the musical side of production, but thankfully this CD demonstrates a good understanding of both. The first track from Alf and Munk is a great morning-type tune with sweeping pads, classic breaks and a nice sub-bass workout reminiscent of early jungle. Alf’s work with Mirage and Ed Gee is also a highlight with diva vocal samples over rolling bass lines, more on the dance floor tip.

This demo also exhibits some luscious down tempo works with layered keys over some leisurely hip-hop beats. **Sulo**

Magnus

Live & Improvised

This group consists of three members operating a drum machine, guitars, bass and keys. Whilst not a real attention grabber on the first listen, this CD has definitely grown on me. The sound is always ambient, with dub influences and bass lines that sometimes remind me of Depeche Mode.

The standout track here is ‘Transit_a’ which has a real ‘Cure’ type feel with feedback-delayed guitar and a descending 80’s style bass line. It would have been nice to hear the drums come out more in the mix or maybe even change a little more, but overall though this is an impressive demo. **Sulo**

Curse Ov Dialect

Untitled

Although this demo was distributed around late last year, it is a worthy CD to look at, if for no other reason than to check out what preceded their recent signing to US label Mush. Those not familiar with the frenzied creativity of Curse Ov Dialect, may be thrown off by the chaotic and desperately quirky musical construction. But rest assured, the clashing of multicultural samples and rhythms, schizo-



phrenic vocals and scratches is crazy, but not insane as I’m sure many critics conclude. Its more like a swirling mash of ideas, sounds and ‘liberated creativity’ underneath traditional hip hop drums. Will Curse blow up overseas before people give them respect here? Probably. **Urthboy**

Symbolic Fantasm

Foot in the Door

With vocals recorded on a single track program and raw production techniques, this Sydney hip-hop crew’s demo is surprisingly impressive. The flows of Orbit and Snail are interesting and rhythmic with a refreshingly humorous outlook while the production of Eos shows a capable ear for sampling. DJ Thunkone lays down tight scratches throughout. Overall it is worthy of a demo release, but with work, this crew will be fellas to look out for in the future. **Urthboy**

Betaville Orchestra

Miss You

‘Klaatu’ kicks off this five tracker with some jazz piano stabs over a lazy break, completed by a cheesy r’n’b a capella that sounds beautifully out of place, if that makes sense. ‘Marla’ is a nice laidback number with warm keys and filtered saxophone lines. It has a real housey feel that moves nicely with low-end rhythms that never quite kick in. The melancholy ‘Miss You’ is my pick, which features a piano motif carrying it along a simple break with some ultra-filtered vocals. Keep a lookout for the album, set to drop early next year. **Sulo**

The Peanut Spell can be heard on 2SER-FM every monday at 12pm.

Judgement Jukebox 01.1

with your host am

A 24-hour liquor license means more than simply allowing the unhindered purchase of alcohol. It is an assertion of liberty, a refutation of mealy-mouthed wowserism, an affirmation of the vigorous frontiersmen values that made this country great. Frequently the clientele of such establishments have an equally libertine outlook, and have done throughout history. From the spittoon-filled saloons of the Wild West and the blood and sawdust pubs in rural Victoria where the Kelly brothers bided their time, to the Mos Eisley cantina where Obi Wan saved Luke’s ass: taverns such as these have slaked the thirsts of the dangerous, the desperate and the foolhardy alike. The Judgement Bar, in Sydney’s Taylor Square, is such a place.

Frequented by those at society’s margins, and those who just like to watch, its very name is an affront to God. But until that promised day of reckoning comes, we who hide from the light will be drawn to it like helpless mariners to a pitiless shore, dashed upon its jagged rocks then washed out onto Oxford Street – the flotsam and jetsam of humanity.

And while we sit there, eyes squinted against the pale dawn, we will listen to what must truly be the devil’s music: the Judgement Bar jukebox, and we will confront the most challenging question ever asked of oneself: what the fuck am I going to listen to?

Make no mistake, it’s no easy task. More than one contender has been moved to tears by the ordeal. I have resolved, then, to use the Judgement Jukebox to probe the darkest reaches of the human soul, to test the mettle of those who claim some knowledge in these matters. In short, to give them \$2 to put in the machine then tell me why they chose what they did and, more importantly, how the hell they can live with themselves.

Alex Davies

Artist, programmer, doll-maker, and weapons-designer: Alex Davies is a maverick by anyone’s definition. He has made his own unique mark on the art world while never pandering to its politics. More than once he has ruined an occasion by wading through the crowd drunkenly brandishing one of his many sabres or flails. His monthly newsletter *The Gilded Trough* is a confused and libelous rant based round his rabid right-wing beliefs and warped sexuality. He divides his time between Sydney and Austria for taxation purposes.

Men Without Hats

‘Safety Dance’ (Video juke)

“A bit of a Judgement Bar classic, always seems to come on at a ridiculous time of night when the alcohol has addled ones brain. This was one of the first pop songs that I remember being enchanted by. I am still perplexed by the bands preposterous name and the film clip is a true classic including medieval dancing dwarves.”

Duran Duran

‘Girls On Film’ (Video Juke)

“This is not my favourite Duran Duran track, I would have preferred ‘Hungry Like the Wolf’. Nevertheless a good catchy pop song, and more importantly a truly adventurous film clip for its period in which scantily clad females bludgeon each other with pillows.”

The Clash

‘London Calling’

“Sheer dismay has forced this track due to the overall decaying selection of good music and contemporary plop. Perhaps it is my current grueling sobriety in this place. Again not one of the most charming tracks by this group but still a delight.”

Beverage of Choice: Laudanum

Deepchild

Rick Bull, or ‘Deepchild; as he’s known to his followers, is a cult leader masquerading as a contemporary electronic musician. Hidden within his music are backwards-masked subliminal messages calling on all that listen to follow him unquestioningly. He spends much of his time at his heavily guarded compound just north of Sydney, where it’s said he keeps a zombie army and a retinue of willing nubile concubines. His latest album, *Chocolate Dubs*, is out now on Dumphuck records and can be found wherever good music is sold.

Stevie Wonder

‘Master Blaster’

“Summer, sensuality, longing, hope and faith. Unexpected Grace. Sounds even better on gritty vinyl.”

Michael Jackson

‘Billy Jean’

“Disco essence in its finest form. Zen and the art of beat maintenance. Classic, catchy, booty-shakin’. I challenge you not to get excited about all that pop can be after listening to this.”

Bob Marley

‘Is This Love’

“The small reminder of the impact that Caribbean music has made on the world. A quietly subversive hope that in every pub, alongside Cold Chisel and AC/DC, is the voice of liberation, longing and unquenchable integrity. Seemingly innocuous, with a deeper current that seeps into the consciousness of even the most cynical piss-head with a dollar to blow on the video-duke.”

Beverage of Choice: Guinness

DEAR DEGRASSI

As I sit here and write this the television is on (quel supris) and there's some 1960s Shirley MacLaine film on where a short guy wearing a lampshade on his head saying “cha cha cha” in seductive tones while gyrating wildly on top of Shirl's bed to some heavily brassed up show tune – it's 8am on Saturday morning.

I know what you're thinking – Degrassi's all cashed up and she's got cable again. I realise it's now time to open that bulging bag of Dear Degrassi mail and answer some questions...

Dear Degrassi,
Where the hell are you?
Bif

I too have heard rumours that while loitering around Castlereagh Street I was lured by “personality testers” into giving away my fortune in order to have alien trace elements extracted from each and every cell of my body using highly questionable detoxifying techniques. And, well, that's not so far from the truth. I'm living in London.

I've now been here for two Royal deaths, the Queen's Jubilee and the World Cup which, because of the time difference between Japan/South Korea and GMT, instigated the passing of a law that allowed pubs to open at 7am so that no one missed out on the true World Cup experience. I thought it couldn't get any weirder than this...

The most striking thing is that British terrestrial TV is so far behind Australian TV because everything is shown on cable first. Even *Big Brother* is shown on cable one day before it's shown on terrestrial. (Which, I have to say, is so juicy over here right now – they're plying half of them with alcohol from 10am while completely depriving the other half, causing near physical confrontations over warts and nauseatingly cringe-worthy blow jobs. Eugh!)

The most frustrating thing about terrestrial TV over here is the complete lack of music videos. That's not to say that there is a lack of music though, it's just that it's all performed “live”. The problem is that in the four to six week lead up to releasing a single, you see it performed on 8 to 12 television shows and you know the choreography by heart! All very well when you're eight and you dream of performing solo in the Rock Eisteddfod, but not so good twenty years on with recurrent ankle injuries...

THE SOAPS
I honestly can't understand why Aussie soaps thrive in the UK. They are so incredibly lame in comparison. It's like comparing an Australian after school series made in Perth to *Twin Peaks*. Summer Bay and Ramsay Street are so squeaky clean compared to the incest, lies, prostitution, drug use and black-mail of Coronation Street and Albert Square. Considering I have I full time job I truly only have the resources to follow one show religiously, and after the teasing glimpse of the show I received in the mid-80s on the ABC, *Eastenders* is the one. You could not possibly understand the hours of research and interviews in the staff room with co-workers I had to put in so that I was able to make any sense out of the programme at all. Now that it's clear I sit in front of the television like a binge eater in front of a fully stocked fridge! And with Spandau Ballet's Martin Kemp recently leaving with a bang (literally) and Goldie making sporadic guest appearances as and Eastend gangsta, you can understand why! Not to mention the fact it continues to employ British comedy royalty in the form of an ex-*Are You Being Served* sex siren and scantily clad Barbara Windsor from the *Carry On* films. Speaking of which...



BENNY HILL LIVES ON!
You know how people are either Cat People or Dog People? Well I ask a variant of that question: If someone held a gun to your head, who would you hold an audience with: Vanilla Ice or Benny Hill? Even before the big V got his arse whipped by Willis from *Diff'rent Strokes* in Celebrity Boxing a few months back, I was a Benny Hill girl, despite his demise last decade. (After all, the highest paid woman on US TV – Jane Leeves who plays Daphne on *Frasier* – was once a Hill's Angel – fact!)

Benny Hill People are well catered for in this country as the PC-free variety and quiz show/variety show variant feature heavily on programme rosters. Somehow the British feel vindicated in their classist, racist, sexist, ageist sense of humour if the lines are delivered by an outrageously dressed, bitchy queen. I'm also not sure whether it's a com-

ment upon Britain's European approach to alcohol or Australia's almost comically American approach to responsible broadcasting that Australians would never see game shows encouraging contestants to mix up large tumblers of rocket-fuel to the recipe they used when they were teenagers, while being egged on by the host and audience to down it in one to win more points for their team and hence a trip for six of them to Ibiza.

DECONSTRUCTING THE INDIVIDUAL
Three shows that appear to be shoving two fingers up at the Geneva Convention are Series 3 of *Big Brother*, *Would Like to Meet* and *Fat Club*. Several weeks into this series of *Big Brother*, two evictees have been subjected to jogging a gauntlet of approximately 5000 people mercilessly hurling projectiles, abuse and booing loudly enough for the housemates to hear – live on television. Now let's hope that production company Endemol's extensive psychological screening programme ensures they chose the right people. So far it seems to have failed as two contestants have walked out of their own accord – one in less than a week!

Would Like to Meet is just cruel. Basically people are encouraged to dob in their nerdiest, most asexual-but-not-by-choice colleagues. This person is then torn to shreds by three “professionals” who don't even pretend to have credentials, changing everything from their clothes and hairstyle to their very personality. Forcing unbearably shy men to offer women in the street a rose in exchange for a kiss... on film? I just know they're editing out the bits where they start to dribble and collapse into a foetal position on the pavement.

Fat Club. What can I say? Take a pretty, skinny, bitchy Cosmopolitan Nutritionist who has nothing but disdain for people who can't control their weight, an American Drill Sergeant who is in charge of the exercise programme, a spineless low talking doctor and put them in charge of humiliating 12 overweight men and women who must have fucked Buddha off last life cycle to cop karma of this nature and you've got *Fat Club*. The lowest point was when they starved them and then set them on each other like it was some sort of cock fight, before they staged a revolt and escaped the mansion fat farm in their own cars and gorged themselves on McDonalds. I swear I'm not making this up!

Remember – television is your friend!
Love,
Degrassi

SPUNK Recordings:

TODAY'S SOUNDS & TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY



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figure 1. A Compact Digital Disc and its player unit, with a conventional LP record to show the relative size.

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