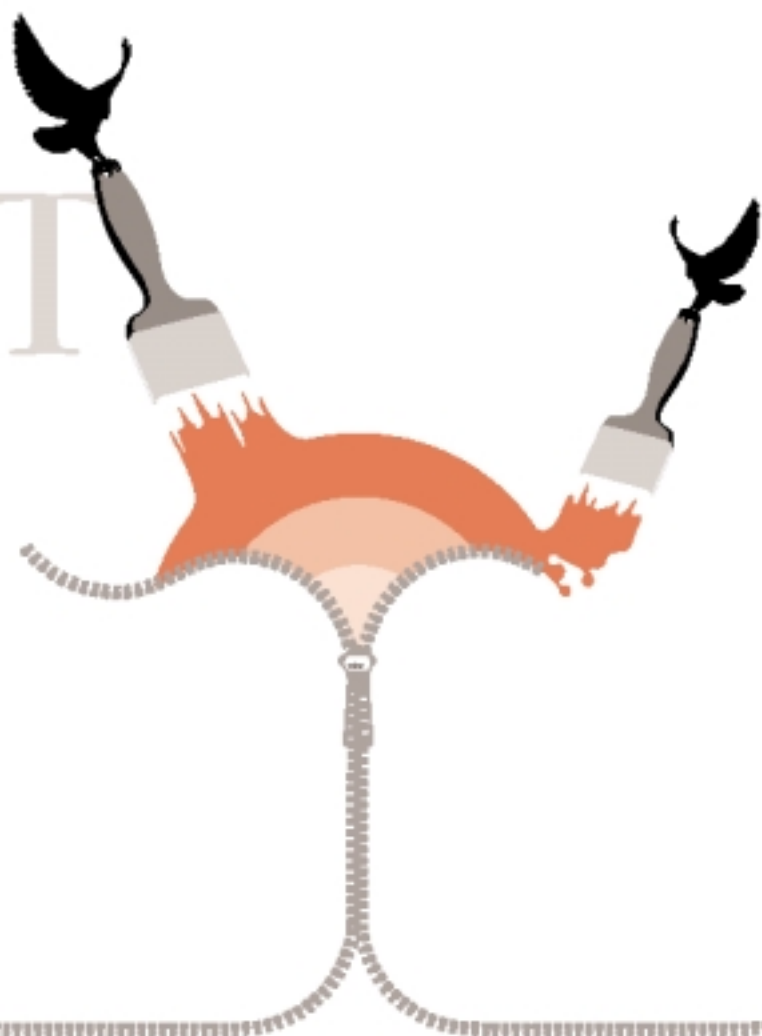


# CYC LIC DEF ROST

ISSUE 11 FREE IN AUSTRALIA



**SUSPEND YOUR DISBELIEF!**

**UPDATE**

★★★★★

"Guaranteed to turn heads"

**FLUX**

"Caribou's new album is fan-fucking-tastic"

**RIP & BURN**

★★★★★

"It still sounds like nothing else on the planet"

**MUSIC WEEK**

"Fresh and groundbreaking... a welcome return from the influential artist"

# CARIBOU

FORMERLY DAN SNAITH'S

# MANITOBA



**NEW ALBUM  
OUT NOW ON**



**ROGUERCARDS**



Featuring members of:  
**MODEST MOUSE, THE BETA BAND  
BLOOD BROTHERS, BUILT TO SPILL  
FREE ASSOCIATION, AIRBORN AUDIO  
PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES  
ANTI-POP CONSORTIUM  
MURDER CITY DEVILS  
and ROOTS MANUVA**

**PITCHFORKMEDIA**

8.4/10

"A highly organic blend of underground hip-hop and indie-rock"

**STYLUS**

B+

"Short, blunt and skitless, AGCT seethes with everything post-aught genre-fucking needs"

**SELF-TITLED DEBUT OUT NOW ON**



**ROGUERCARDS**



We welcome your contributions and contact:

PO Box a2073  
Sydney South  
NSW 1235 Australia  
info@cyclicdefrost.com  
www.cyclicdefrost.com

ISSUE 12 deadline: 1/07/2005

**Publisher & Editor-in-Chief**  
Sebastian Chan

**Art Director & Co-Editor**  
Dale Harrison

**Sub Editor**  
Aparna Khopkar

**Reviews Editor**  
Dale Harrison

**Advertising**  
Sebastian Chan

**Advertising Rates**  
download at [www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com)



**Distribution**  
Inertia Distribution ([www.inertia-music.com](http://www.inertia-music.com))

**Printing**  
Torch Publishing

**Web Programming**  
Giv Parvaneh, Qbique ([www.qbique.com](http://www.qbique.com))

**Web Design**  
Luke Elwin, Qbique ([www.qbique.com](http://www.qbique.com))

**Web Hosting**  
Blueskyhost ([www.blueskyhost.com](http://www.blueskyhost.com))

**Guest Cover Design**  
Joe Scerri

#### Issue 10 Contributors

Alex Crowfoot, Bob Baker Fish, Lawrence English,  
Matt Levinson, Tim Levinson, Peter Hollo, Ron Schepper,  
Alex olo, Guido Farnell, Dan Collins, Dan Rule, Anna Burns,  
Bim Ricketson, Angela Stengel, Max Schaefer, Luke Killen,  
Barry Handler, Melinda Taylor, Jai Pyne

#### Thank You

Nick, Ash, Justin, Chloe @ Inertia, Natalie, Noel & Wayne  
@ Torch Publishing, Giv @ Qbique, Chris Bell at  
Blueskyhost, and all our advertisers.

The views contained herein are not necessarily the views of  
the publisher nor the staff of *Cyclic Defrost*. Copyright remains  
with the authors and/or *Cyclic Defrost*.

## ISSUE 11 CONTENTS

**4 COVER DESIGNER:**  
**JOE SCERRI/LAKE LUSTRE**  
by Bim Ricketson

**8 VELURE**  
by Anna Burns

**10 MONKFLY/FREQUENCY LAB**  
by Angela Stengel

**14 JODI ROSE**  
by Bob Baker Fish

**16 ARCHITECTURE IN HELSINKI**  
by Vaughan Healey

**21 FERAL MEDIA**  
by Sebastian Chan

**24 COMBAT WOMBAT**  
by Dan Rule

**27 AUTECHRE**  
by Peter Hollo

**30 KEITH FULLERTON WHITMAN**  
by Ron Shepper

**34 MUSIC REVIEWS**

**50 SLEEVE REVIEWS**  
by Alex Crowfoot

**53 SELECTS: SIR ROBBO**  
by DH

**Plus online at**  
**[www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com)**

### MORE MUSIC REVIEWS:

Including: Accelera Deck, A-ux, Boris Hauf,  
Bucketrider, Cooperblack, Enuma Elish, Fast &  
Bulbous, Günter Müller + Steinbrüchel, Gus Till  
Hammock, Hesius Dome, Homrong Chum Ngek,  
Johann Skugge, Phillip Samartzis, Plat, PXP,  
Ronnie Sundin, Seven Ark, Shuriken, Suicide,  
Tomas Korber & Kazuya Ishigama, Uber Stomp,  
Layla, Roots Manuva, Prefuse 73, plus compila-  
tions: Alt + F4, C.U.E. Compilation, Dub Pastry,  
One Point One, Transient Travels

**MORE ARTICLES:**  
**SOLE, MIA, MCENROE**  
**CHRIS CUNNINGHAM**

### MP3 DOWNLOADS



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.

# EDITORIAL

**Hola! Welcome to issue eleven.** This issue is our first mass assault on Europe with two thousand copies touching down at Sonar 2005 in Barcelona along with a double CD sampler of Australian music courtesy of Austrade and the Australia Council. Perhaps you are one of the lucky folk sitting back in the Catalunyan sun sipping on cava suddenly discovering that there is some great music on the other side of the world, or alternately you are sitting snug and warm on a couch under a doona in share house-hold in wintery St Kilda or Newtown wondering 'where can I get a copy of this CD?'

There's always been amazing experimental and independent Australian music (just look at Australian punk and post-punk) but even with the evolution of the internet, it is still a real struggle for the rest of the world to get much of an opportunity to hear it. In fact, at least for a part of their careers, it is almost a given that the best will leave Australia and move overseas to be able to sustain their music. Australia is an unforgiving and under-populated, spread out, and sport-obsessed nation, but every so often these geographic, demographic, social and cultural factors make us strike out in spite of them. *Cyclic Defrost* is one such strike against geography.

In this issue we have a guest cover design by ex-patriate Australian Joe Scerri and his colleague Dominik Huber who are now based in Switzerland, at least for now. Like all our covers, Joe, the designer, is also an electronic musician recording as Lake Lustre. There are interviews with Sydney-based label Feral Media, and the artist-run experimental space the Frequency Lab, Melbourne's Velure, Architecture In Helsinki, activist eco-pioneering hip hop crew Combat Wombat, as well as Jodi Rose who tours the world recording the sound of bridges. Rounding this out we dig into Keith Fullerton Whitman aka Hrvatski and fellow sound experimentalists Autechre. Add to that a stack of reviews and a digging in the crates of Sir Robbo who happens to co-run our Sydney-based weekly club night Frigid.

If you are new to the magazine then we'd encourage you to check out on website ([www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com)) where you can download music from some of the featured artists as well as search and print back issues, and read all the web-only interviews and reviews which didn't fit into the print version of the magazine. For this issue, the online version has extra interviews with M.I.A., Chris Cunningham, and indie rappers Sole and McEnroe. The web site is undergoing a redesign at the moment and will be unveiled in Issue 12. Until then, make contact, join our music club, tune into a live stream of our weekly radio show, and enjoy the finest sounds from our southern continent.

**Sebastian Chan & Dale Harrison Editors**

## STOCKISTS

**NSW:** Victory Music, Plum Music, Market Music, Troy Horse Rock Shop, Hi Fidelity Lounge, Salamander Sound, Spot Music, Redback, Spank, Music @ Byron, Hum on King, Hum on Miller, Hum on Oxford, Leading Edge Warriewood, 360 Sound, Leading Edge Penrith, Mall Music, Electric Monkeys, Fish - Newtown, Fish - Glebe Music, Bizarre, Euphoria, Freestyle, MCA, Metropolis, Recycled, Explore Music, Disc, Reefer, Record Store NSW, So Music, Red Eye

**VICTORIA:** Licorice Pie, Slap, Readings Carlton, Northside, Kent St, CC Geelong, Recycled, Missing Link, JF Porters, Boston Sound, Voyager Port Melbourne, Record Collectors Corner, Second Spin Tech, Voyager Ivanhoe, Greville, Sister Ray, Polyester, Synaesthesia, Central Station Melbourne, Substrata, Gaslight, Raouls, Kriskay

**ACT:** Impact, Landspeed

**QUEENSLAND:** Skinny's, Rockinghorse, Butter Beats, Sunflower, Toombul Music, Alleyway, Cosmic Music, Leading Edge, Music Scene

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA:** Dada's, Mills, Central Station Perth, Planet Video, Chinatown Records

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA:** Muses, Big Star, B Sharp, Chatterbox, Uni Records

**TASMANIA:** CD Centre, Ruffcutt, Wills Music, Aroma  
**NT:** Casuarina

If your store doesn't carry *Cyclic Defrost* then get them to order it from Inertia Distribution

sober

FEATURES / LOCAL

## Cover Designer Interview with Joe Scerri/Lake Lustre by Bim Ricketson

WOODPECKER  
HOLDING

# LUSTRE FOR LIFE

YOU'VE PROBABLY CAUGHT ON BY NOW: ALL THE DESIGNERS CHOSEN TO CREATE COVERS FOR *CYCLIC DEFROST* ARE INVOLVED IN MUSIC AS WELL AS DESIGN – SOME RUN LABELS, OTHERS DESIGN RECORD COVERS, SOME ARE MUSICIANS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. BUT THE BACKGROUND TO THIS ISSUE'S COVER DESIGNER IS ESPECIALLY *CYCLIC* IN ITS LINKING OF MUSIC TO DESIGN AND BACK AGAIN.

ANNEX

Joe Scerri got into music first, spending his school years absorbing the '70s underground music explosion. Design came next, directly from music: a particularly luscious record cover has driven Scerri ever since.

'I was born in London at the time of flower power, on the same day, same morning, same area that playwright Joe Orton was murdered,' explains Scerri. "'If You're Going to San Francisco' was number one at the time. My parents are Maltese and we moved from London to Perth in the early '70s where I did all my schooling years. I took like a magnet to the English music scene in when I was about 12, liking the more underground "non-commercial" music sound.

'Out of this grew a great fondness for the relationship between Vaughan Oliver and Nigel Grierson of 23 Envelope and 4AD. I was introduced to it by the cover of *Head Over Heals* by the Cocteau Twins. It excited me so much to see such fine detail to type, photography and design that I bought it regardless of the music. The image of a dark and brooding image of dead fish floating among the debris of carnations and oil

was an integral part of the artwork. It was just the oddest combination of elements but perfectly aligned. It was the first time I looked at typography seriously, which spawned an obsession to all art, all music, and other related merchandise.

'It was then I trusted the instinct I'd had as a 12 year old to desire a life of work with graphic design. Before studying units of drawing, film making and painting, I enrolled at the Central Metropolitan College of Visual Arts in Perth, Western Australia and began the gruesome three-year task of learning everything by hand: typesetting, bromiding, hand drawing, photography, typesetting with mathematical complexity and learning the process in stages to complete finished artwork. Then came the computers, where everything was learned again at the click of a mouse and the push of a button. It was hell. It was the age when technology was fast becoming acceptable, but in retrospect, I am very thankful for having learned both techniques.

'I must admit, I'm really not attracted to technology as a tool. I find that too much use of it means you lose the ability to communicate directly and you can somehow get caught up in the nonsense of the computer thinking for you. I like my approach to remain one with a more human sensibility.

'Often, I'm more satisfied with the complete working process of how things are made and built. The final result is obviously a part of this process but once it has arrived, I feel that there is a sense of closure and completeness. It is free to

do as it wishes. I feel like I am not responsible for how it functions as a design or composition of sound because it now belongs to the public ear and eye. For example, when I was about 6, I was really fascinated in the way I could strip something right back to reveal its skeleton. My older cousins always gave me hand-made models of planes, hovercrafts, ships and cars, but it was not the object that I was intrigued by, rather how I could turn it into something completely different by reversing the process and pulling it apart piece by piece. I'd then have handfuls of grey, plastic debris and get into a lot of trouble.'

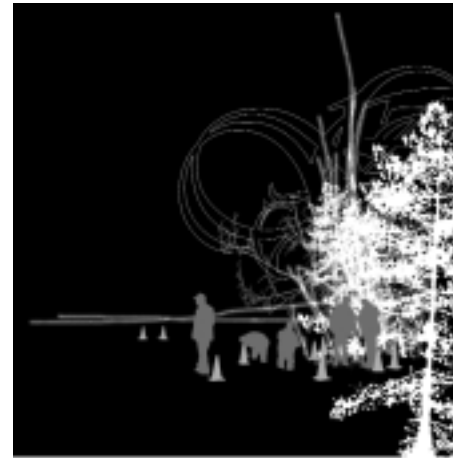
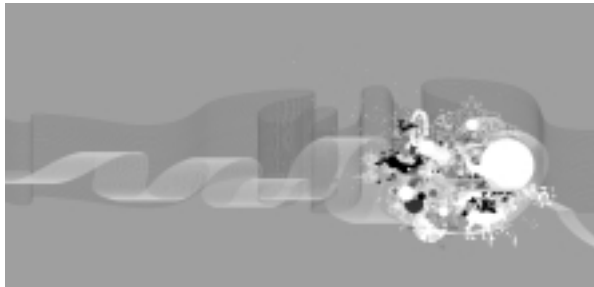
A similar exploration of process was the leap-point for Scerri's musical development. 'Before the world of computer madness, I actually was obsessed with making sounds with my own hands,' he explains. 'It was all very lo-fi and taped onto a tape recorder (we are talking mid-'80s here), via the instrumentation of an untuned bass guitar, Casio keyboard, musical toys, phones, tape loops, kitchen utensils, turning vinyl backwards and sampling beats directly from records at different speeds. My gifted guitarist cousin gave me a homemade amp, which was awesome and sounded like a blown eardrum – it often created interesting effects.'

While graphic design and creating music may relate, Scerri sees the two very differently. 'It's not something I think about too often,' because even though there are similarities, they are also worlds apart. Graphic design in most cases is generally two dimensional, and music tends to



TABLE

Above: Various Joe Scerri logo designs - from top: Sober (his collaboration with Dominik Huber), Woodpecker Underwriters; Annex nightclub (both in Basel), Art Flowers, Sydney and Table Design, Basel



have a lot more scope, depth and scale; even though we can't define sound as a shape or form, it ends up being on par with emotion. But both sound and graphic design are often tied together by the fact that they are built from a series of multi-layering and composition.

'In design, I lean towards using Illustrator and working in a vector-based environment. Musically I work in two programs: Sound Edit and Ableton Live. Sound Edit is like Corel Draw. It is the two-cans-and-string of the mobile phone world. I feel like it has a comparable relationship with pixels or vectors in the way that it works. It's very lo-fi and does not have a multitude of effects or plug-ins. It's basically an environment that relies on you as the user to do all the thinking. I wrote *Indecipherabilia* on it and feel like it's a major achievement because the program, I believe, is only used for the editing of sound for video or animation. I doubt other sound artists would have taken this approach.

'I also am the artist behind Lake Lustre, which began in the early summer of 2000, in Sydney. My first release came in the form of an 8-track CD on the Abflug Records label in Helsinki, called *Indecipherabilia*. I was responsible for all the CD artwork and the website ([www.lakelustre.com](http://www.lakelustre.com)) to coincide with the release, and a support slot for those [Australian] electronic groovers, ollo in Europe on the Accidental Tour(ists) of summer 2004. I wanted to have a good cross-section of work that I felt very strong about. I'm currently writing more, which I hope will get released in the future but, at this stage, I'm just concentrating on composing. With a full time job, I only get so much time to create.

'If I had to describe it, it'd definitely fall into some sort of moody, downtempo electronica category. The album doesn't follow a particular style, but has been influenced by everything in my record collection. "Balloonic" has a crunchy glam-rock beat fuelled with duelling balloons, a driving deep bass and lullaby vocals. "Cul De Sac" began its life as I hummed the bassline after spending the day on Sydney's Bondi Beach, "Dragonfly Museum" records my movement from one country to the next, except I

wrote and sung the intro in Switzerland and the uptempo second half in Sydney. I still feel it to be very Australian in every way, as it breathes my personal history of growing up in Perth and Sydney. The inspiring landscapes of Switzerland have just pushed me into understanding the importance of being Australian, and I think it shows in its diversity of influence. The fact that Australia is not rich in tradition – in white tradition – has allowed me to explore.'

Although the name seems to conjure images of glistering Swiss lakes, or 'seas' as they generously like to call them in Swiss German, Lake Lustre was created before the move to Europe. 'The name Lake Lustre was penned while in Sydney in late 2000,' he explains, 'a long time before I'd made a temporary home in Switzerland. It really does have a visual connection with the lakes and the alps, but that was not my intention. It was a word play on the word lacklustre. I didn't actually know at that stage there was a Finnish electronic artist called Lackluster, but he (Esa Ruoho) heard of me via a website where a music fan was questioning the similarities of our confusing names, and wrote to me proposing to remix me to confuse things even more. The idea was just perfect! "Lackluster remixes Lake Lustre" is definitely the next tongue twister after "She sells sea shells by the sea shore." Ruoho has recently completed a fine remix of "A Foreign Scene", which I just love. Strange how things unfold.

'If I left it up to all the press I have had, my music has been described with amplitude of positive variation. I'm guessing that the writers responsible have understood where I have been coming from, and that they haven't quickly lumped it into a particular genre or category. I like so many sounds from different periods.

'I first started listening to music seriously when I was 12. My first live show was Devo in '82, and after than I just went nuts with music. I was really into British New Wave, which then grew into post punk and electronic. Now I'm listening to King of Woolworths, Brooks, Opak, Burt Bacharach, Cursor Minor, Lisa Gerrard, FourTet, Broadcast, Slowdive, Erik Satie, Siouxsie, David Sylvian,



Above: Various Joe Scerri designs - including above middle, the inside cover of Lake Lustre's *Indecipherabilia* and left; treatment for Annex nightclub

Plaid, Björk, Alexandroid, David Bowie ... It could all change tomorrow. I love Australian electronica too. It really is miles from anything made elsewhere, operating on a platform of uniqueness.'

Getting the album distributed coincided with a sense of freedom that comes with being an unknown in a new place. 'When I moved to Europe I felt very anonymous and full of energy. I made up a few Lake Lustre demos and sent them out to some interesting and small labels around Europe, and Abflug Records was in the first batch of three CDs I sent. Karri O, the owner/operator got back to me in a few weeks and said he was very interested in putting my music out, but it was a matter of finance and timing. So with that in mind, I kept writing and finishing off the demos, and a year later, Abflug Records released *Indecipherabilia* on CD.

'Funnily enough, I think Lake Lustre is comparatively very different to the other artists on Abflug Records who are more on the glitch, ambient, crunch-beat and deep techno side of things. However, Karri really loved Lake Lustre and I guess he's very open for new things. I proba-



Anyone who's ever got into the business of starting an independent label knows all too well the highs and lows of working in one of the most competitive industries around. To get a better perspective on independent electronic music in Australia, we spoke to an AIR member about where they see the industry heading.



# AIR TIME

## SILENT RECORDINGS (LABEL MANAGER, STUART MCCARTHY)

*Part of the Undercover Music stable of companies, Silent Recordings releases the artists CODA, Prop, Tracky Dax and Telemetry Orchestra. Deliberately setting out to release music that blurs musical genres, the label says they refuse to see music cut, dried and processed for the plastic teeth of today's consumer society.*

**WHY DO IT ALONE? JOIN AIR AND ACCESS A WHOLE NEW LEVEL OF ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION**

**Presented by the Association of Independent Labels**

For more information about AIR go to [www.air.org.au](http://www.air.org.au)  
Silent Recordings can be found at [www.silentrecordings.com.au](http://www.silentrecordings.com.au)



## Has the industry changed in the past few years?

Yes it has and quite dramatically. There has been much confusion over the whole digital download situation and sales in general have fallen. Majors have reacted by culling rosters and have forced the market with manufactured pop acts that by and large have further alienated many listeners.

Improvements in technology have meant that pretty much anyone these days is capable of producing a great sounding record from their home studio. This has resulted in a much broader base of artists releasing music, to the point where I think you can say there's almost too much music in the world today, making it harder and harder to compete for radio & TV adds and for listeners attention in general.

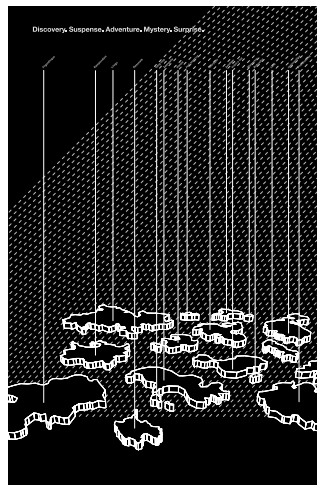
As far as electronic music is concerned, the last few years have seen a major drop in sales. In part due to the 'renaissance' of rock-'n'-roll and also because electronic music has struggled to remain fresh and innovative.

## From your perspective what are the main challenges that lay ahead for independent Australian electronic music?

A lack of labels actively signing and promoting local electronic music (especially to a wider audience), the competitiveness of radio at this time – it is becoming increasingly difficult to get national airplay through Triple J.

## What is the main benefit to electronic labels in joining associations like AIR?

Overall support and advice, assistance with grant applications, AIR compilations, servicing radio and assistance in representation at overseas trade fairs like Popkomm & Midem



bly sound slightly more accessible than the other Abflug output. The roster of artists is Formatt, Hinterlandt, Karri O, Verhaverbeke Krzyzosiak, Vygandas Simbelis and O Samuli A, so it's a fairly small but great Finnish label.

'I have totally relied on the internet for most of my international communication. With Abflug, all communication was restricted to email and mail, which worked out perfectly as we both live in different countries. We have actually never met each other. I just realised the other day that it had been over a year since I was in an English speaking country.'

When Scerri left his life in Sydney for Basel, Switzerland, he was most thankful for two things: time and space. 'I have spent a considerable amount of time developing and conceptualising, both in design and music, which I believe has been strongly influenced by the landscape itself. The sheer scope of the Alps reminds me directly of the grandness of the Australian deserts. I don't think there would be another country in Europe with such dramatic topography that has a simple and direct power that overwhelms you. I find it hard to believe that objects like mountains can be of such massive proportion to what is down below. If that does not affect you, you ought to be made of mesh and steel.

'Even though Switzerland gets labelled as a very sterile country, there is more to it than the cow bells, watches and chocolate. There is so much support for the arts, which the Swiss consider a great asset to culture. There are literally museums and galleries everywhere. It is a fairly-organised and well-structured society, and that is reflected in the art that is produced here. So yes, it has influenced my thinking very much.

'The primary reason for moving to Basel was not because it was the electronic musical hub of Europe, but because my partner is from here. And I thought the move would broaden my horizons immensely. Basel is the pharmaceutical city (where valium and LSD were invented) and where the well known international art fair Art Basel takes place (every two years) on the same weekend as Sonar. The geographical location really could not have been any better. In the centre of western Europe, a few hours on a train from anywhere and right on the border of Germany and France.

'I was living in Sydney up until the move, and felt like it was time to place myself in a completely alien landscape and learn something very unparallel to what I was used to. The other great thing about living in Basel was that it was home to a rich and colourful



history of Swiss graphic design. There are some really wonderful and very inspiring designers from here, and it's home of the Helvetica and the Frutiger family of fonts. There is your classical Swiss order to the post-modernist experimental approach of typographer Wolfgang Weingart with his anarchic sensibilities, and the clever craft of Happy Pets and Buro Destruct.

'Basel is a city famous for its discipline and traditional approach to graphic design, where many ex-Bauhaus related teachers have tutored. As a student in Perth, I had a typography teacher called Jill Yelland, who was previously a student at the Basel School of Design under Wolfgang Weingart. Weingart, who recently retired, was a student of Armin Hoffmann. Dominik Huber, (the other half of Scerri's design partnership, Sober) studied under Weingart too, when I met him, he asked me if I knew Jill Yelland, and we all had a laugh at how all these people had come full circle.

'I began work for MRG Communications, a medium-sized agency where I produce all culture-related design briefs. Here I met Dominik, and we sparked up a great friendship through frustrations of commercial work. We decided to collaborate on projects and came up with our name Sober simply by me giving him an English dictionary telling him to give me the first

word he sees. Sober was it. We've been experimenting with some designs and can see that we're both coming from the same planet. This *Cyclic Defrost* cover is the work of Sober. It's our first published work, and we are currently working on other experimental designs with typography and vector illustration.

'Dominik has a really extraordinary way of approaching design and typography; to break down, rebuild, deconstruct, and fragment. We are very much on the same level of thought, and always distressed about compromise in the industry. It's really hard sometimes to realise a complete project to the end, without having to compromise halfway down the track. I do find this distressing as I am quite passionate about design and I think most people outside these circles (the clients) don't understand how much work actually goes into a project. I'd hate to call myself a purist, but simplicity is not something that occurs in most people's thinking. Neither is the understanding of space and composition. These people usually make the corporate sponsor logos so big that they end up looking like the title. People are scared of space! Have you ever noticed in a restaurant, the first tables to go are the ones against the walls?

'I don't go about thinking my approach is better than his, hers or theirs, but to identify a problem with the right solution is a huge challenge for everyone. Never lose sight of what you intended the project to be and always remain faithful to the initial concept. Once it goes off the rails, it's lost.'



available now:

CHRIS ABRAHAMS  
Thrown CD

DJ OLIVE  
sleep CD

M. RÖSNER  
alluvial CD

ERIK GRISWOLD  
allora sketches CD

ROD COOPER  
fiction CD

DJ OLIVE  
buoy CD

ZANE TROW  
for those who hear actual voices CD

GRISWOLD/PATERAS  
lid split 10" lathe cut

Distribution:

COUCHBLUP (australia)  
FORCED EXPOSURE (USA)  
LOWLANDS (europe)  
NORMAN RECORDS (UK)  
PLOP (japan)  
POST EVERYTHING (UK)  
ROUGH TRADE (UK)  
SMALLFISH (UK)  
STAALPLAAT (europe)  
SYNAESTHESIA (australia)

forthcoming releases:

STEINBRUCHEL  
opaque CD

OREN AMBARCHI & ROBBIE AVENAIM  
clockwork CD

WARM:  
5 years of ROOM40 mixed compilation/sampler CD

upcoming tours:

DJ OLIVE  
may-july, australia & new zealand

TUJIKO NORIKO  
august, australia

WWW.ROOM40.ORG  
free downloads + exclusive dj mixes celebrating five years of ROOM40 in 2005



Lake Lustre's *Indecipherabilia* is released on Abflug Records  
see [www.lakelustre.com](http://www.lakelustre.com) for more info

## Interview with Dan West by Anna Burns

# VELURE: FINE CUT CLOTH

IMAGINE YOU'RE ABOUT TO START RECORDING YOUR DEBUT FULL-LENGTH ALBUM. YOU'VE HOOKED UP WITH A PRETTY GREAT PRODUCER WHOSE PREVIOUS SONIC ADVENTURES YOU ADMIRE. YOU'VE GOT THE TUNES, YOU'VE GOT THE VISION, YOU'VE GOT THE COLLECTIVE VIBE. YOU GET INTO THE SWING OF IT, PLAYING, PRODUCING, REFINING – BASICALLY MAKING YOUR MASTERPIECE – UNTIL IT ALL GOES A LITTLE PEAR-SHAPED. NO, THIS ISN'T A TALE OF EGO DUMMY SPATS, CONFLICTING IDEAS OR BAND SPLITS, IT'S A TALE OF THE UNPREDICTABLY LONG AND ADVENTUROUS ROAD THAT MELBOURNE BAND VELURE WENT ON TO RELEASE THEIR DEBUT ALBUM *CARE FOR FADING EMBERS* ...

Velure was born in Melbourne in 1999 when Dan West, Roy John and Lynnelle Moran got together and started writing songs. Between them they had a number of influences, instruments, a sampler and computer (sans ram!). It was quite a limited and labour intensive set-up. Chris Hale and Lachlan Carrick came to the party, making Velure a five piece. A couple of years later they evolved from a more traditional band with electronica interests into a technologically-savvy group. West explains the shift: 'The sounds you can get using computers, you can't get from traditional instruments. We're really into pulling different sounds out of traditional instruments as well, but we just found it was the best way to deliver the shift in how we were hearing the songs. It's electronica in a song-based format.'

What sets Velure apart from the majority of electronic stuff is the organic feeling to their songs and Lynnelle's beautiful voice, which carries their music to another level. Their 'traditional' roots flavour their electronic escapades, both in sound and length. Lengthwise, their tunes are closer to songs rather than soundscapes, but still have that level of experimentation and texture expected in electronically-generated music.

So that's the background. But what about the recording of the album?

It all started out perfectly: they were working with Erik Lloyd Wolkoff, a producer from Norway who had worked with Portishead and written tracks for Café Del Mare compilations. They'd met doing some gigs in

Sydney. 'He was good fun and we all thought it would be good to do the album with him; he had a great overall vision for what the album would be,' remembers West. 'So we started working with him, which was great, and then unfortunately, he passed away. It was sudden and unexpected. It was quite a big shock.'

Some bands might be knocked over by such a blow. Velure decided to continue on and to stick with Wolkoff's ideas. They blended them with their own as they finished the record without their producer and with their grief. 'We avoided trying to think "What would Eric think about this?" or "What would Eric do here?" because you can't assume that,' says West. 'You need to be speaking to someone to get that insight and information, but we continued with his vibe for the album. It's finished now and we're really happy with it!'

So, what were Wolkoff's ideas for the album? As a live band, Velure move between downtempo to more hip/trip-hop, dub-flavoured and uptempo, breaky stuff as well. According to West, Wolkoff was 'into the downtempo, dub-flavoured thing. Most of the tracks on the album are ones he chose and then we wrote a couple of other things after he died as well.'

They continued to send their material to Wolkoff's team in Norway after his death. 'We had been sending it to his colleagues who mix on a Sony Oxford desk over there, which is this full-on digital system, and they had some really nice outboard gear as well,' remembers West. 'After his death we spoke to Øystein Halvorsen, who's the producer at NRK in Norway and had worked with Eric for a long time. He said he'd really like to finish the album. Working with Øystein was great because he'd worked with Eric for so long, he had this great digital set up, and some fantastic space echoes and analogue tape delays. He's right on.'

Although they had never met with Øystein, everyone



understood what they wanted and could communicate freely over the internet. 'He'd send stuff across, and when we made revisions we'd send them back. He was really great and would do them that night – you can imagine that there could possibly be months between responses, but we worked really expediently with him,' says West.

Performing live is an important part of Velure. Aside from having great visuals and an understanding about the art of performance, the band tries to road-test their songs before recording them. 'We generally like to play them live quite a bit before their final recording,' explains West. 'We demo them up early on and then let them grow from there. We find they develop quite a lot each time we perform them. There's some controlled improvisation going on in each gig. There's room for the players to explore things, within the context of the tune.'

Although Velure have only just finished *Care for Fading Embers*, they're already onto the next project. Rather than needing a break after the long and dramatic process of getting the album into the world, Velure are starting to think about what's next – laying down samples, beats and basslines.

Velure's debut album *Care for Fading Embers* is out very soon through MGM

see [www.velure.com.au](http://www.velure.com.au)  
for launch details etc





# clan

## ANALOGUE

Australia's longest-running independent electronic music label and arts collective,  
releasing electro, dub, lo-fi, ambient and electronic music of varied persuasions.

### COMPILATIONS:



DOPPLER SHIFT:  
ELECTRO SELECTIONS  
CA034



DEFOCUS:  
LOW RES PRODUCTIONS  
CA032



HABITAT:  
ENVIRONMENTAL SOUND  
RESEARCH  
CA030



SOLID GOLD:  
20 MORE DISCO GREATS  
CA028

### ARTISTS:



BLEEPIN' J. SQUAWKINS  
'FLOPPYDISCO'  
CA035



DARK NETWORK  
'LATE SET'  
CA033



PRETTYBOY CROSSOVER  
'ANY NUMBER CAN PLAY'  
CA031



DISCO STU  
'AN ENGLISHMAN IN IBIZA'  
CA029

Visit [www.clananalogue.org](http://www.clananalogue.org) for mp3s and more information.

Contact [clan@clananalogue.org](mailto:clan@clananalogue.org) for distribution and licensing enquiries.

Distributed within Australia by 



## Monkfly/The Frequency Lab Interview with Chris Hancock by Angela Stengel

# FREQ OUT

ONE WEEKEND. NINE ARTISTS. NO LICENSED VENUES AND NO BACKYARD PARTIES. COULD YOU DO IT? DUE TO THE RISING NUMBER OF ARTIST-RUN SPACES IN SYDNEY, IT'S NOW AN EASY CHALLENGE TO ACCEPT. YOU CAN START AT SPACE 3 – ONCE A BANK – ON CLEVELAND STREET, IN INNER-CITY SUBURB REDFERN, FOR AN EARLY SESSION OF INDIE, ELECTRONIC OR SOMETHING IN-BETWEEN. THEN YOU COULD HEAD TO YVONNE RUVÉ FOR A COSY LATE NIGHT OF SOME MORE EXPERIMENTAL SOUNDS. AND YOU COULD EVEN WALK ALONG THE CORRIDOR AND STICK YOUR HEAD INTO THE FREQUENCY LAB SPACE LOCATED IN THE SAME BUILDING ON ELIZABETH STREET IN SURRY HILLS.

If you peer into the Frequency Lab on any night of the week, you'll most likely find Monkfly, or Chris Hancock to his friends. He was one of the people who started the Frequency Lab space a few years ago. 'We were sitting next door and the radio was on,' he says. 'We were banging away on our music and graphics and stuff and we were a bit stunned. It was one of those Alternative Lectures on community radio station 2SER – a Canadian guy called Amiri Baraka talking about this poetry club that he and his wife run. Matt (who also runs the space) and I had been speaking about how Sydney is boring and then we heard this news about a poetry club. Baraka was saying, "It holds 60 in the main room and we've had to open up the second room which holds 20 standing, and with the windows open another 10 people are able to participate." We found it fasci-

nating. He finally came to the point that he was talking about his own house, and as a result of wanting to see things change and a desire for a performance space, just thought, "Why can't I use this space?" We were living next door to what's now the Frequency Lab, in a warehouse, and looking at our space thinking it's ridiculous to be complaining about the state of things when really – maybe having to do it illegally initially – there's no reason not to be putting as much culture forward as we can. Our housemates at the time felt slightly differently so we ended up moving in here, getting the lease here and setting up this space.'

Since Hancock and his warehouse cohorts opened their doors, people have come to improvised music nights, drum'n'bass parties, spoken word events, film talks and gallery openings. Each type of event brings with it a different mood and a different type of audience. 'Opening your door to a whole bunch of people is a scary thing. It's a beautiful thing as well, because it

## Artist-run Spaces In Inner Sydney

### FREQUENCY LAB

www.the-frequency-lab.com  
107/342 Elizabeth St, Surry Hills  
*Regular nights:*  
*We Like You (improv sessions)*  
*Token Word (poetry, spoken word etc)*

### YVONNE RUVÉ

104a/342 Elizabeth St, Surry Hills

### SPACE 3

Corner of Cleveland and Regent Sts,  
Chippendale, NSW

### LANFRANCHI'S

www.lanfranchis.com  
Level 2, 144 Cleveland St, Chippendale

assumes that your fellow woman and man are sensible and don't want to destroy things. Sometimes we open the door and just see idiots tearing things apart. Other times a full house of 200 come in and the place is spotless when they leave and you just think that people can be so lovely and respectful. I'm always amazed by how much silence can be found in the audience when there's a performance on here. Even on the Token Word poetry nights you'll have 150 people slowly getting pissed and they're all quiet – just listening to the ones out the front shouting out their latest rhyme or poem. It's fantastic.'

Entering an artist-run space means going into a world where entry and beers are by donation, the artists rise from their cushion in the crowd to perform, hefty bouncers don't hover at the door, and the act – not drinking or socialising, although these are equally important – is always given the most respect and focus.

'There's a good lot of good people in Sydney,' muses Hancock over his coffee and hand-rolled

cigarette. 'You've just gotta put them into different environments and people are people again. After having played in bands to three old alcoholic dudes at a bar and thinking, "This isn't a respectful environment." You can't experiment in that sort of environment.'

He goes on to talk about legendary musician John Cage, and it is clear that the idea of controlling a space for music and art to exist without the usual capitalist approach wasn't new to him. 'I was lucky enough to do some musical study at the University of Western Sydney and read about characters like Cage and people like that who had a really big emphasis on setting up a different context for music to be digested in. Then, potentially, you can have different forms of digestion and a space for different music to emerge. Sometimes music is context specific. You can't necessarily come into a club and do this because people are there with a certain assumption.'

The live music situation in Sydney is a sad and tired topic. Venues come and go, and it is rare that a good one will stick around for long before turning into a place for commercial house music or Irish bands. The lack of good music venues was part of the reason for the Frequency Lab starting. 'A lot of Sydneysiders had been complaining about the nature of Sydney and how generally boring and commercial it was,' says Hancock. 'It's difficult to get stuff out there that you believe in and have nights with-



## THE FIRST TIME WE OPENED THE DOOR THERE WERE HALF-BUILT WALLS AND IT WAS A GREAT ABSTRACT PARTY ZONE, BUT PARTICULARLY HAZARDOUS AS WELL

out the economic rationalist angle: pack the club and make it as commercially viable as possible.'

But even in the warehouse business, there is still a need to think about running a venue that can be economically successful. 'When we first opened up I had to do parties pretty solidly to just get the capital in so we could have the time and space to do more fringe stuff and not have to make as much money.'

There has been an emergence of venues that fill the void between large licensed venues and artist-run spaces of late; places like Spectrum on Oxford Street and The Kirk in Surry Hills. Hancock is not surprised by this trend. 'I think it's a realistic thing. Sydney is overcharged and overpriced. It is necessary for the vibrancy of the city and the community to have these cultural bits accessible and therefore, we can't do the usual massive club size, but we can tuck Spectrum in upstairs where another bar that generally doesn't get used is. And there's still the

banging club downstairs with its usual clientele.'

Those 'usual clientele' may never get to hear the music Hancock makes under the name Monkfly, but if they did, there is a good chance they would like what they heard. While his recent first album *Signore Baffone* is an eclectic mix of sounds and genres, there is the odd dance tune that could get anyone into a dancing, partying mood. 'I've always been searching for music that is authentic for me,' he says on the topic of his new album. 'What I've created on the album is the only thing I could honestly contribute. I love all the tear outs of drum'n'bass and the fat hiphop music that's around. I love all the stuff that the [Australian independent label] Elefant Traks lads do. But, to me, that's not honest from my perspective because my ears do seek out other sounds as well, like a lot of the stuff that comes through here. Seeing that at the end of the day it was more about community it doesn't matter what music there is unless it actually speaks to people.

**Preservation**

**2005**

**Now**

**Motion**  
**Movement in Australian Sound**  
 2 CDs of Australia's finest electronic and experimental artists including Clue to Kalo, Mint, Pirron and Qua.

**Tara Jane O'Neil**  
**Bones**  
 Stark and compelling folk ambience with beautiful acoustic guitars, piano, found sounds and electronics.

**Saddleback**  
**Everything's a Love Letter**  
 Classic composition and electronic abstraction – tender melodicism that draws on jazz, folk, pop and ambience.

**Soon**

**Grand Salvo**  
**Steffen Basho-Junghans**  
**Martin Siewert**

**Distribution**

**Inertia Australasia**  
**Forced Exposure USA**  
**A-Musik Europe**  
**Map-Up Japan**

[www.preservation.com.au](http://www.preservation.com.au)  
[hello@preservation.com.au](mailto:hello@preservation.com.au)

I'm a bit of a perfectionist as well, so this is the first time I've worked in a public space making music, so that definitely influenced it. I probably wouldn't have said it'd be done for another year or two, but people around here would say "Yeah, it's great, don't touch it anymore."

His album could evoke playfulness in the most sombre person. The opening track, 'The Stupids', is a bouncing ska-like tune with Bermuda B playing clarinet and seemingly having a lot of fun with some powerful scatting. 'Culture' combines samples from an Alternative Radio

last drum'n'bass and jungle party, we had to spend half a week insulating one of the walls just to ensure it would go from start to finish without police turning up. The warehouse has gone through some very rough phases. We wanted to build it all before opening up the doors but being a do-it-yourself project, it sort of established itself at its own pace, financial restrictions being part of that. The first time we opened the door there were half-built walls and it was a great abstract party zone, but particularly hazardous as well.'



*Cleaning up the space after moving in, and inset, what it looks like now*

lecture ('Because you cannot allow the institutions created by imperialism to be the only purveyors of culture') with well-produced smooth bass and tight beats. He's highly skilled at creating stories in his music through the use of vocal samples and the influences of the musicians who are featured on the album. 'I've always been interested in a whole plethora of music. When characters would come in I'd ask if they'd wanna lay down some keys or something. There's a piano player who lives upstairs (Campbell McGuinness from Entropic), Donné who was coming through the building, and the poet Jess (who all feature on the album). There are lots of different influences.'

'I remember lyrics from a lady – heard from albums of friends – a lady called Ani di Franco. There's a tune of hers, I don't know what it's called, but she talks about "Whatever happened to the day when a record was a record of time?" To me that's a lot of what this record is about. The stories are encoded or referenced to the building and the friendships. There's one tune which unfortunately didn't get finished, which has my landlord threatening to kick us out. It'll be on a future thing I guess.'

Living, working and hosting events in a warehouse can have more problems than just the landlord. 'Before the

As Hancock tells of the early days, morning sunlight streams through the back windows because of an empty block behind the warehouse. On a nearby couch someone is preparing for a fabric-dyeing class that's about to begin. 'Initially Matt and I slept on the floor as we were setting stuff up and building this wall and that wall,' says Hancock as he points. 'Then we slowly built ourselves rooms and the end result was to actually turn them into studios. Now there's a gallery, an office, Matt's studio, another lady's digital studio, a sound studio and the performance area.'

'No one really lives here at the moment, but it houses a few people when they're in between places. Matt and I are fairly resilient people, but after a while, living here got too much. No personal space, but a good lesson. Not something you wanna do for an amazing amount of time. I think we were here for just over a year which is quite surprising in retrospect.'

The building the Frequency Lab calls home, Hibernian House, was built around 90 years ago and has a heritage listing on its steel frame. 'It's the first steel frame building and in an amazing location so the owners can't knock it down at the moment – well, they haven't found a way around it, or it's the least of their problems. To some

degree the heritage listing protects our future here, however they are doing as little as possible to maintain the building so that will accelerate its falling down, potentially not as long as it would otherwise be. Maybe only a few more years. Or five years. Or maybe a big chunk of it will fall down in the next year.'

Hancock explains the varied and colourful past of the building. At the moment the surrounding levels contain sweatshops and their sounds filter through the ceiling and floor. 'You can hear the Korean pop music coming from downstairs and the buzzing from all the sewing machines.' But at the same time, it has always been a hangout of creative types. 'The landlord acknowledges that there's been a history of artists in here and that they're willing to live a little bit dirtier,' is how Hancock puts it.



But the building gets more bizarre than sweatshops and warehouse parties. 'This used to be an old dentist,' notes a bemused Hancock. 'I don't know who would come to get their teeth done here. There used to be a false ceiling which we took down because it was a bit too low. That had fluorescent lights. It looked a bit better, but not much. The dentist was in operation until about only a year before we moved in, maybe two years. I've had a couple of characters who must only be in their twenties, come in and go, "Oh bizarre, this is where I used to get my teeth done as a kid."'

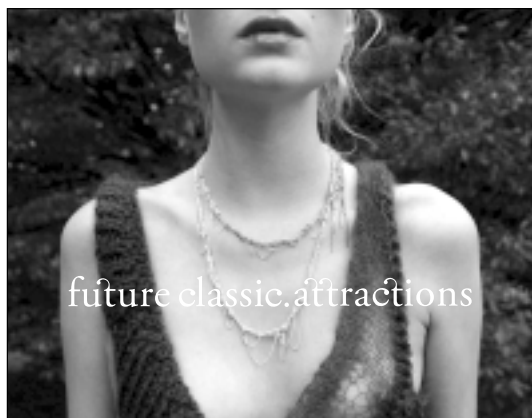


**Monkfly's *Signature Buffoon* is out now on The Frequency Lab label and is available at [www.the-frequency-lab.com](http://www.the-frequency-lab.com)**



# future classic.attractions

Sophisticated dancefloor sounds from Australia



Sophisticated dancefloor sounds from Australia. Mixed by Nathan McLay

An insider's preview into the new breed of production talent emerging from Australia, *Future Classic Attractions* features twelve exclusive tracks for dancing and lounging.

An eclectic selection of cutting edge electro, house, broken beats and future jazz from Deepchild, Jamie Lloyd, The Stick Figures, Kidzen, Eddit, T-Rek, Mako, Andrew Maher, Gauche, Mike Ross, Amphibian and Thruster.

Available exclusively at the Apple iTunes store - until July 2005

For more information on releases, tours and events visit [www.futureclassic.com.au](http://www.futureclassic.com.au)



CD and 12" vinyl sampler available July 2005. Distributed in Australia by Inertia Distribution [[inertia-music.com](http://inertia-music.com)]  
Future Classic worldwide vinyl distribution by Goya [[goyamusic.com](http://goyamusic.com)]. Riskydisko worldwide vinyl distribution by  
Word and Sound [[wordandsound.net](http://wordandsound.net)].



Jodi Rose micing up

## Jodi Rose/Recording Bridges

Interview with Jodi Rose

by Bob Baker Fish

# CABLE TALK

**DO BRIDGES SING? IT MAY SEEM LIKE A PECULIAR QUESTION TO ASK, YET IT WAS THIS VERY QUESTION THAT SPARKED A TEN-YEAR ODYSSEY FOR SYDNEY-BASED SOUND ARTIST JODI ROSE THAT CONTINUES TO THIS DAY. OF COURSE WHEN THIS NOTION POPPED INTO HER HEAD SHE, LIKE MANY OF US, HAD NEVER ACTUALLY HEARD A BRIDGE SING, YET UNLIKE MANY OF US SHE NEVER ACTUALLY RULED THE POSSIBILITY OUT. SO NOW, SOME TEN YEARS LATER, SHE HAS HER ANSWER: DOCUMENTED PROOF ON A DOUBLE CD ENTITLED *SINGING BRIDGES*, FEATURING THE 'VOICES' OF BRIDGES FROM PLACES AS DIVERSE AS FINLAND, VIETNAM AND TASMANIA. IN FACT, THESE DAYS ROSE FEELS UNMISTAKABLY DRAWN TOWARDS BRIDGES, POSSESSES AN INCREDIBLE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE ON BRIDGES THE WORLD OVER, AND HAS SOME GRAND PLANS THAT ARE ONLY NOW BEGINNING TO COME TO FRUITION.**

'Everyone wants to know: "Why bridges?"' she laughs pre-empting the obvious question. You get the sense that it's a question she's become more than accustomed to answering, though she approaches her obsession (she's the first to admit it's an obsession) with such good humour and enthusiasm that it's hard not to be carried along for the ride. 'Bridges are beautiful, they're

in between places and they have a strong draw on the imagination for people,' she offers sitting in the empty confines of Loop Bar in inner city Melbourne, a few hours before the launch of her debut CD. 'But essentially it was a moment of curiosity. I was at art school, going across Sydney's old Pyrmont Bridge when the Glebe Island Bridge was being built and it looked like a giant harp. And I thought, "Hey, I wonder what that sounds like."'

The reality is that to human ears, bridges sound like nothing. Sure, you can hear the sounds of the traffic and other external factors, yet what interested Rose were the cables and, in particular, what she refers to as the secret voice

of the bridge, that which is inaudible to the human ear. After contacting the Australia's national broadcaster, the ABC, for equipment, she arranged with the engineer to record the still uncompleted bridge ('I wrote this really nutty letter saying "I think the city is our temple, the electronic networks our religion, and the sound of the bridge is the voice of the divine"'), utilising contact microphones and Piezo transducers placed directly on the cables.

'I can attach directly to [the cables] so they pick up vibration basically,' she offers, "and it can be internal or set off by traffic or wind, or sometimes I can play on them a little bit, touch on them or bang on them. But the things I really like about it are the inaudible sounds that are all around us that we don't actually tune in to.'

Whilst this recording occurred in 1994, Rose didn't return to bridge recording until 2000, though since 2000 she has been steadily travelling the world, recording and researching the hidden voices of bridges. Her travels have taken her to some of the most iconic bridges in the world, including the Millennium Bridge in London, the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and the Brooklyn Bridge in New York. What has surprised Rose is each bridge's unique voice, with its design and immediate environment playing an important role in the timbre of the voice.

'I guess I'm most surprised by how different they all sound,' she reflects. 'One of the things I wouldn't have imagined – which is kind of strange and a little bit spooky – is that every bridge has a sound that relates to the place where it is. Like the bridge on the Mekong Delta in Vietnam – even though the sound is me hitting it with my ring, its still part of the bridge – which people say sounds like an Asian gong, or the bridge in Helsinki that sounds like an icy Scandinavian tinkling sound.

'Every one is completely and utterly different,' she continues. 'They all have their own voice. I read a book on Sufi mysticism a while ago, about the way vibration is the key to the order of the universe, and everything vibrates at different frequencies. There's this whole idea that human beings have an electrical current in our body and we vibrate at a particular frequency, but you can actually tune yourself up or down. And that's one of the things: bridges actually have a resonant frequency, any kind of structure does. I heard



about the bridge in Tacoma Narrows in Washington State that collapsed in 1940. It was called Galloping Gertie because it was already a little bit wavy – they hadn't quite worked out the stiffening trusses yet – and the wind picked up enough speed that it hit the resonant frequency of the materials of the bridge and they just buckled and fell into the water. When I heard about that I did have some kind of anarchic dream of being able to tune into all these bridges and set them off at once and to see them just dissolve and fly off into the ether.

'But I'm not promoting war, I'm a peace loving girl,' she laughs. 'It's more that the bridges are all singing together; a global symphony is what I'd really like to create.'

Surprisingly, this notion of a global bridge symphony is something that has been with Rose since the beginning, and whilst it was a financial impossibility a decade ago, the democratisation of technology has now put this goal within her grasp. She is currently at work with Sophia Lerner on an experimental radio project in Helsinki, work shopping different ways of making radio.

'Part of what I'm going to do for that is to test out my idea of getting live sound from different bridges,' she offers excitedly. 'I'm hoping to get one in London, one in New York, and one in Helsinki. We have people with software that allows you to take multiple live streams and mix them and broadcast them back out as a single stream.'

Rose doesn't see herself as a musician or a composer, primarily because she doesn't work with any sounds except bridge sounds. However this has allowed her to accept her sounds for what they are, without feeling the need to engage in any form of electronic manipulation trickery.

'It's been a really good lesson,' she reflects. 'I've just had to say to myself "It is what it is." The main thing is hearing what's there and not imposing my own judgments or ideas on to it; just being really true to bringing out those sounds. I've selected them and shaped them a bit by going by textures and I've had a couple of composition methods over the years, so I think the CD takes you through all of those as well.



*Placing contact mics on the Brooklyn Bridge, NYC*

'When you hear them they have really strong, definite rhythms,' she continues. 'They don't have a strictly musical development but if you take the John Cage/Pierre Schaeffer idea that any sound or noise is music once you listen to it with those ears in that context, then of course it will have a musical development. But in terms of electronic music there are definitely things you can hear in there. It's perhaps a bit raw and unformed, but it does take you somewhere.'

Whilst there are some similarities to the work of telephone wires recordist Alan Lamb (whom she hadn't heard prior to working with bridges), Rose's textures and approach are all her own. She could perhaps be considered part of the Australian Aeolian sound art movement (An Aeolian Harp is played by the wind – named after Aeolus, the Greek God of the Wind), comprising of herself, Lamb and Jon Rose (no relation), who records fence posts. However, for Rose, it is less about the wind than about her love of not only the infinite sonic possibilities of the bridge, but its resonance within a culture.

'They define a place and become an icon,' she reflects. 'And they're often at the forefront of technological innovation. The fact that they stay up is amazing, and I like cable ones because you can see the tension of

the architecture in the bridge. I've recorded other steel bridges and they had interesting sounds, but for some reason they didn't capture me as much as suspension bridges.

'There's an inherent musicality about bridges because they're cables, just like stringed instruments,' she continues. 'It's the whole thing of bridges being these huge structures, but tenuous as well. Something about that juxtaposition is quite intriguing and beautiful'

People have assumed that bridges are only a phase for Rose, and have wondered what's next once her interest wanes, though to see her enthusiasm and hear the passion with which she speaks it quickly becomes clear she is in it for the long haul. 'I can very clearly see the ludicrous side of it, even though I'm passionate about it and I'm dedicating my life to it,' she says laughing. 'I'm always excited to go to a new bridge, a new place and hear what it sounds like. It's quite beautiful. I take it seriously but I don't take it too seriously.'



**Jodi Rose's *Singing Bridges Vibrations: Variations* is out now on Sonic Artstar**

[www.singingbridges.net](http://www.singingbridges.net)

# liquid architecture 6

The sixth Liquid Architecture Sound Arts Festival, 2005  
**Melbourne:** 1-7 July **Brisbane:** 7-9 July **Sydney:** 13-16 July **Cairns:** 14-16 July

Featuring **Eric La Casa & Jean-Luc Guionnet** (Fra), **Thomas Brinkmann** (Ger), **Natalie Beridze** (Ger), **DJ Olive** (USA), plus the usual top-class Aussie talent.

For more information, see  
[www.liquidarchitecture.org.au](http://www.liquidarchitecture.org.au)





FEATURES / LOCAL

**Architecture in Helsinki**  
**Interview with James Cecil**  
**by Vaughan Healey**

# FINNISH LINES

THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE MYTH OF ROCK ABOUT THE CAMARADERIE OF THE BAND, THE MAGIC POWER THAT EMERGES FROM THE COMBINATION OF EGOS AND TALENTS. A BAND AT ITS BEST IS A COLLECTIVE FORCE WHOSE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THE PARTS, AND WATCHING A GOOD BAND IS LIKE WITNESSING A LOCALISED ZEITGEIST: THE INDIVIDUAL ENERGIES COALESCE INTO A NEW FORM THAT FEEDS BACK, AND PUSHES THE BAND AND AUDIENCE INTO UNCHARTERED TERRITORY. IF YOU ARE LUCKY.

That charismatic energy lies in the heart of Melbourne octet Architecture In Helsinki. In the flesh, an AIH show can be a bewildering ride through dynamic tempo changes, finger clicks and swapped instruments. You never really know who is going to sing or what will happen next, and somehow the eight-piece juggles this anarchic structure with a music class worth of instruments and staging rearrangements.

Their second album, *In Case We Die* brings the thrills and spills of an Architecture In Helsinki show into your own home. Produced by vocalist Cameron Bird and drummer James Cecil, the album was recorded at the band's own studio lair, the mysteriously named Supermelodyworld. The album is concise, clocking in at around 40 minutes. Co-producer and drummer James Cecil explains the length as a matter of preference. 'Sometimes long albums really work, but we're really into making a short album that flows from start to finish – and as we release it on vinyl that's another reason to keep it that length. Structurally, the album has a side A and B as well.'

*In Case We Die* is compact, but doesn't feel short. Arrangement and structure follow their own complex internal logic as songs sprint through verse and chorus lines, surprising reprises, schizophrenic breakdowns and shouty refrains that can occasionally resemble a primal-therapy encounter session. It raises the question: how does an iconoclastic 8-piece arrange music? Are things planned, or is it more a process of jamming out songs?

'Sometimes it works like that, but then often Cameron brings songs to the band fully arranged. As the recording process goes, obviously things get fleshed out; you may have started out with a particular thing in mind but that might change,' explains Cecil.

Is it a democratic process? Do people ever get annoyed when they are told what to play? 'It's pretty flexible because most people in the band can play multiple instruments,' Cecil says. 'If there is a part to be played, generally anyone in the band can play that part. When it comes to playing our songs live, if someone really wants to play something then they can just jump in first and grab that.'

'Cameron writes all the songs, and the records are produced by myself and Cameron. Because we do the recording and production by ourselves we tend to think of songs in terms of recording, and think of the production in terms of melody and lyrics. A song might take shape and will work on its own level as a song, but will also have its own ideas about how it will sound.'

The twists and turns throughout the album, combined with the eclectic instruments, could easily result in something sounding cluttered or confused, but instead the album is held together with imagination and a strong production aesthetic. Grand stylistic gestures are unified



## SHACK-T

**Instrument(s):** Tuba, trombone, key bs and bvs

**Zodiac:** I don't know. May 26

**Place of Birth:** Warrnambool

**Which number child were you in your family?** Two

**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?** Is this a trick question?

**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?** Only in the big gaps

**Do you judge people on first impressions?** Oh, immediately

**How far would you go on a first date?** It was a long time ago

**Do you believe in life after death?** I think I do.

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** a pop-rock combo.



## KELLIE

**Instrument(s):** Keyboards, vocals, clarinet

**Zodiac:** I'm in the special league of Capricorn (props to Jan birthday crew, werd)

**Place of Birth:** Sydney, Australia

**Which number child were you in your family?** Number 2 of 2

**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?** Pass

**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?** In time. You should *always* clap in time.

**Do you judge people on first impressions?** It depends on how drunk I am

**How far would you go on a first date?** As above

**Do you believe in life after death?** Nope

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** a near death experience



# couchblip!

label, distributor and online store

<http://www.couchblip.com>

make visits to the post office fun  
by sending your demos - po box 243  
broadway nsw 2007 australia

In September 2005.....

## Conrad Newholmes presents Peppermint Styles

The eccentric producer better known as Smaze1 returns as Conrad Newholmes. His mind is a Gordian knot, his life is a can of worms, and his music is one of it's testaments. His first full length CD Peppermint Styles will offer a balance of instrumentalism, and straight up new-romantic hip-hop beatheads....stay tuned.

through the band's clear vision, where function follows form. Which brings things back to Supermelodyworld.

'It's a studio we run ourselves with a bunch of instruments and a mixing desk and microphones,' says Cecil. 'We recorded the album there. We are definitely advocates of having the time to try things that you can't when you are paying \$1,000 a day.'

Take the title track. "In Case We Die" (the song) is a 3'33" pop song which skirts through four-parts without losing its way. Is there a little bit of magic at Supermelodyworld? 'A little bit of magic, a little bit of mould. During the recording of the album we has a leak from the plumbing next door. We had to get the mop out and get our hands wet, but we've put everything up on shelves now. Computers don't take too kindly to getting wet. But it's a fully functioning studio now, we're open for business!'

The release of *In Case We Die* comes two years after their debut LP *Fingers Crossed*. While generally well-received, *Fingers Crossed* failed to properly capture the energy of the group. 'That was one of the criticisms of the last album. We definitely had a few agendas with this album in response to the reactions of a few people to the last album. I think it's a bit less twee and a bit less light than the last one.'

Listening back, *Fingers Crossed* sounds apprehensive and a bit shaky. 'The last record was about us finding our voices, it was the first time that Cameron had sung on a record and the first time we had made an album,' Cecil concedes. 'I think this time around Cameron has found himself as a songwriter, and the playing has really improved, so there is much more of a solid foundation.'

*In Case We Die* is both clearer and more idiosyncratic than its predecessor. The band's presence is stronger, something apparent in the physicality of the playing and vocals. It sounds like a band confident in their singular approach, and who has benefited from regular touring around Australia, developing a feverish fan base in the process. 2004 also saw the band tour the US, and score a couple of high profile support slots for the likes of David Byrne and The Polyphonic Spree. According to drummer James, the tour with David Byrne was significant. 'Talking Heads, since I was about 12, was one of the few bands I have constantly listened to and appreciated on new levels. Also, David Byrne has been responsible for so much good music; his label Luaka Bop has reissued so much amazing stuff that has been a big influence on myself and the rest of the band.'

Talking Heads and in particular, Tom Tom Club, a side project by members of Talking Heads, are an obvious



**JAMES TRELAWNY BUCK CECIL**  
*aka J-Legs, Jimmy Sessions, Silky Cecil, Cecillos, Cutiepie, Uncle James.*

**Instrument(s):** Percussions, Guitar, Keyboards, Amplifiers, Transducers, Computer, Percolator.

**Zodiac:** Crab

**Place of Birth:** Fitzroy

**Which number child were you in your family?** One

**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?** Gee ... that's tough.

**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?** When everybody else does.

**Do you judge people on first impressions?** Yes, although it may be revised.

**How far would you go on a first date?** There.

**Do you believe in life after death?** Only until you reach complete oneness with the universe. After that it's immaterial, baby...

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** fully cosmic.

# ELK THE NEW ALBUM FROM inga liljeström

*imagine Björk and Portishead  
on the set of a David Lynch film*



Also on Groovescooter recently: 'Warp + Weft' - the dark digital-jazz lp from ENS  
Coming soon: 4th release from cinematic maestro DON MEERS + 'Music For Film' Vol. 2



**GROOVESCOOTER RECORDS : GROOVESCOOTER.COM**  
FRIENDS ARE JUST PEOPLE WITH THE SAME TASTE IN MUSIC





## JAMIE MILDREN

Instrument(s): guitarbasskeysfluteglockmelodica

Zodiac: balance

Place of Birth: Dubbo NSW

Which number child were you in your family? last

Which note is a perfect fourth down from C? A-

When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra? All the way through keeping time

Do you judge people on first impressions? Only every third Wednesday

How far would you go on a first date? Kilometres

Do you believe in life after death? Why not?

Architecture in Helsinki is... something far far away



## CAMERON BIRD

*aka Bird-Dog, CB, Excitable Misunderstood Genius\**

Instrument(s): Voice, axe, plastic ivory, assorted clunks, dreamer of pyrotechnics.

Zodiac: The fish. I am passive aggressive, creative and almost sensitive.

Place of Birth: Carlton via outback Australia.

Which child were you in your family? I was a Siamese twin so it was a dead heat.

Which note is a perfect fourth down from C? The what? I only just learnt the names of the strings.

When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra? When you have woken up half way through the second movement.

Do you judge people on first impressions? As much as it is human nature, I try not to dislike men with permed hair.

How far would you go on a first date? I went to Northern Queensland.

Do you believe in life after death? For sure, there are two evil spirits in my cupboard. My friend Dave thinks they're his grandparents.

Architecture in Helsinki is... 8 brown belt karate enthusiasts with a penchant for crescendos.

*\*according to a Wu name simulator*



qua - painting monkeys on clouds  
surge0011



toby1 - cracks increase  
surge0010



epoq - skinsla  
surge0009



qua - forgetabout  
surge0008



2002AD - analog2digital compilation  
surge0007



vimi - linden, home of the hits  
surge0006



pretty boy crossover - the building  
and formation surge0005



aspen - are you that retail snob?  
surge0004



modula - audio dismantle  
surge0003



superscience - love like life in miniature  
surge0002



initial release - compilation 01  
surge0001

watch out for the new release from tim koch (surge0012) out soon.

7" vinyl series now available:

- 1 qua - rainy day pink mouth / pretty boy crossover - skiprope
- 2 similar - red / jeff symons - drift
- 3 backfeed slumber - wet stuff for electric boys / toby1 - european
- 4 brunatex - the city (timk rmx) / epoq - morning filters

surge サーヂェリ - www.surgerrecords.com.au



## ISOBEL

**Instrument(s):** Trumpet

**Zodiac:** UFO

**Place of Birth:** Very close to where we played on April 28.

**Which number child were you in your family?** First and last  
**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?** What are you really asking? Are they music-school dropouts? Gee ... I don't know  
**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?** When they use the harp and the timpanis.  
**Do you judge people on first impressions?** I have a category system

**How far would you go on a first date?** No more than 5km, unless I was really into them - then maybe I'd cross the river.  
**Do you believe in life after death?** I believe in life after birth and death after life ... and zombies ... and memories.

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** busting to play at your birthday party. Call us



## SAM HUCKLE VON PERRY

**Instrument(s):** Bass and Guitar, little drums and keys

**Zodiac:** I'm a Ram

**Place of Birth:** Charlton, Victoria

**Which number child were you in your family?** 2

**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?** G, maybe. Can anyone in our band answer this?

**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?** At the end of a movement.

**Do you judge people on first impressions?** Unfortunately, yes. Usually I'm right. I'm pretty good with that shit  
**How far would you go on a first date?** A kiss, maybe. If I like her!

**Do you believe in life after death?** No

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** Where the downward and the upward spiral meets(?)

approaches to some of the things that we did on the last tour - the logistics, like car hire.'

Moving an entourage of eight around on tour isn't cheap, but at least those dead hours spent in transit offer an opportunity to share some music, and in that sense, the more the merrier. 'On tour, we spend a lot of down time sharing mix-tapes and swapping music.'

Earlier this year, the band got the chance to transmit a typical Architecture In Helsinki mixtape when programming an hour of radio for JJJ. Cutting between the Wu Tang Clan and Can via Morricone and AOR mainstay Hall & Oates, makes for interesting listening and sheds some light on Architecture In Helsinki's record collections and what feeds their music. 'We all listen to a wide range of music and we try to capture a range of feelings from that. We have a shared vocabulary of production, so by the time we went into the studio to record *In Case We Die*, Cameron and I had a hit-list of the tracks that were doing it for us.

'We always try to avoid boxing ourselves in to any particular style and I think this album takes us out of any particular pigeonhole. The last album got the twee indie pop label attached to it, but we like to think that people can approach our music without a preconceived notion



## RON 'THE HAMMER' HARDING

**Instrument(s):** Hammer-On Guitars ... mainly

**Zodiac:** Leo... headstrong ... for Hammering-On ... hard!

**Place of Birth:** Guitarkus...it's a planet in Galaxy GX20375.

**Which number child were you in your family?** Number 2s

**Which note is a perfect fourth down from C?**

Maaan ... I don't Hammer-off ...like, down the fretboard or somethin' craazy like that... I only Hammer-On!

**When should you clap during a concert presented by a symphony orchestra?**

As long as it's in time to the song ... who fuckin' cares man!

**Do you judge people on first impressions?**

You're okay by me, man... don't freak out on me, now.

**How far would you go on a first date?** All the way... always.

**Do you believe in life after death?**

Y'know, there was this one time I was Hammering-On, like, this totally wicked lick, and flicked my hair back and a bit went in my mouth and, like, almost totally choked me. And that was, like, the closest I've ever been to dying. So yeah, I'd say I'll go somewhere or do something after I choke on the big one.

**Architecture in Helsinki is ...** a bunch of fuckin' pussies!

of what they are going to get. I think it has been pretty successful on that level.'

It can be easy to label Architecture In Helsinki 'twee indie pop', but that's missing the point. The music is celebratory and honest, almost a reaction to both the acute individualism of DJs and laptop warriors, as well as the melancholic conceits of shoegazer guitar bands. These guys know how to rock out, and they want you to have fun while they do it.

**Architecture in Helsinki's *In Case We Die* is out now on Tailorm Bend/Inertia.**

see [www.architectureinhelsinki.com](http://www.architectureinhelsinki.com)





## Feral Media Label Profile

Interview with Danny Jumpertz and Caroline Chisholm

by Sebastian Chan

# FERAL WILL

IN AN ELEGANT COINCIDENCE, MY INTRODUCTION TO ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND TO 'PROPER' MUSIC SUBCULTURES CAME AT THE SAME TIME AS MY INITIAL INTERACTIONS WITH DANNY JUMPERTZ OF FERAL MEDIA. THERE WAS A STORY IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER ABOUT RADIO SKID ROW LOOKING FOR NEW ANNOUNCERS AND PROGRAMMES, AND FOR ME IN MY FINAL YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL, IT WAS AN IRRESISTIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING WORTHWHILE WHILST PROCRASTINATING OVER EXAM STUDY. SHORTLY AFTER, DANNY TOOK OVER AS STATION MANAGER. IT WAS A TUMULTUOUS TIME IN SYDNEY'S MUSICAL HISTORY.



Radio Skid Row (2RSR) was at a bit of a turning point. Based in the inner-Sydney suburb of Marrickville, the station had been set up in the 1970s as part of a wave of 'community radio' projects funded by the Whitlam government. Drawing on the local community's multicultural diversity, indigenous heritage, and the strong student and leftist politics of the surrounding areas, and broadcast range, 2RSR became the radical, free-spirited, activist radio station for the inner city. However, by the end of the 1980s, the original spirits that drove this and other similar stations towards communitarian, self-governing models of management were withering. The de-regulation of the financial markets, pri-

vatisation and the beginnings of neo-conservatism coupled with a stock market crash in 1988 had also begun to impact on activism: people were burnt out, tired, and their causes were failing to get media exposure as Australian media barons Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Packer increased their stranglehold on local media. Between 1990 and 1992 the station began to radically change. There was a musical revolution brewing in the inner city – rave was emerging, taking over the warehouses of Alexandria and Mascot by night – and 2RSR was where a lot of the scene's emerging DJs would pitch for shows. As in most other cities around the world, rave was equal parts entrepreneurial dog-eat-dog party drug capitalism and psychedelic, socialist utopianism. The latter fitted well with 2RSR's history, but the former rubbed up against the older broadcasters and listeners. It was in an ideological battle of '70s activist versus '90s entrepreneur that I first met Danny Jumpertz when he joined 2RSR as station manager.

'My early involvement at Radio Skid Row was as part of the Australian independent music collective,' explains Jumpertz. [Having previously worked in commercial radio] it was very refreshing and I brought quite a bit of naivety, good

energy and optimism. The collective management principles of Skid Row could only work effectively with everyone pitching in, but unfortunately the station was quite factionalised – there just weren't enough people working towards the common good, and when coupled with chronic cash flow problems as well as strong self-destructive actions from within, it meant the station never emerged from a crisis situation. Unfortunately, there was a gulf between the idealism people held and action required to make it work ... When I became involved in the management of Skid Row I think some of the more capable '70s activists were becoming less hands-on. These people had done the hard yards: set up the station and given it a strong identity, but unfortunately Skid Row was always struggling due to the limitations of its license. The signal just wasn't powerful enough to reach enough people ... By the time I left 1993 I was quite burnt out! It was the end of eight years working in radio, from big commercial entities to leftie community stations. I had started as a trainee announcer straight out of high school in 1984 at 3CS in Colac in southern Victoria. After Skid Row, I edited a backpackers' magazine for a couple of years in Sydney which ended up providing the opportunity to set up Feral Media.'



## CAROLINE CHISHOLM'S QUICK PRIMER ON FERAL MEDIA ARTISTS:

### PLANKTON

Danny's band. The impetus for Feral Media to become a record label. Recordings released so far include a self-titled EP, a radio-only release called *Songs For Spring*, the debut *The Undertone* (2003) and recent release *Insomnia* (2005).

### COMATONE

Greg Seiler. A close friend of Dan's from Southern Cross Uni, and an absolute gem, creatively and as a person. We've done his acclaimed debut *One Into One Out* (2003) and the recent, and also highly (and deservedly) lauded, *E-50* (2005).

### MIELI

Ryan Gobbe. Another close friend of Danny's from uni and a wonderful person to work for and with. Talented too; it goes without saying. His album *Version* (2004) is just bliss to listen to! We hope to do another with him in the near future.

### CATNIP

Danny played with the lovely Catnipppers Richmond Brain, Nerida Trask and Greg Ryan when we lived in Melbourne. We put out their first EP *Pink & Blue & Green* (2003) and they're currently working on their debut album with Chris Thompson, but are going to go with a different label for this.

### DAVID ELIOTT INCIGNERI

Danny had such belief in this Melbourne producer when he heard his material that he wanted to put out his debut release *I Sat On The Corner Of A Page Of The Novel Of My Mind* (2004). It's different to everything else we have on the label, and I think that's a strength. It's low-fi, psychedelic, indie pop.

Even though it was nearly five years before the dot com boom, Jumpertz managed to convince the backpacker magazine to fund him to set up a website for them as it was clearly going to be 'the future of publishing'. Armed with a sizeable wad of cash, the idea lasted a year until the magazine went broke and Jumpertz headed overseas. Upon returning, he decided to study music at university. 'Feral Media started as a web design company in 1995,' says Jumpertz. 'I fudged my way through that for a couple of years then decided to focus on music full time, which involved getting my confidence up with gear and technique, so I played my uni 'card' and started a Bachelor of Music in [the rural northern NSW town of] Lismore. The course was quite jazz focused, in a way that jazz was promoted as the high watermark of contemporary musical expression, though our composition lecturer, Michael Hannan, was very supportive and encouraging of the musical renegades on campus. [Overall] Lismore did pro-

to go with an independent label to release the second *Whatever* compilation and then the individual releases from selected artists, so Danny put in a proposal to SBS to do these releases through Feral Media. Because of Danny's hard work and dedication to the project and his excellent relationships with the bands, established through recording 33 different bands for the *Whatever* project, they backed us, and the result is a double CD compilation and four upcoming full-length artist albums.'

'The bands that are releasing albums in this deal are Sparrow Hill, Barrage, The Emergency and The Rich,' continues Jumpertz. 'They are signed directly to SBS, and we've



vide me with lots of space and time to immerse myself in studio work and multi-track experimentation, and that's mostly where I would hang out with [future Feral media signings] Greg Seiler (Comatone), Ryan Gobbe (Mieli/Twotone) and Angus McCready (Plankton). We were all weird studio geeks, grabbing all the overnight bookings in the university facilities.'

Having been friends for years Danny and Caroline Chisholm both moved to Melbourne in 2000 for three years. This shift opened up new opportunities and growth for the label. Chisholm elaborates: 'A dear friend of mine from university who I used to share a house with, Will Berryman, a bass player in Melbourne bands Studley Lush and Parpl, ended up working for SBS (Australia's government-funded multicultural TV and radio broadcaster). He had a great idea for a music project, which SBS were working towards in conjunction with Cinemedia (now Film Victoria) and later the Australia Council. Will knew that Danny had just completed his degree moved to Melbourne, and asked if Danny would help with some of the recordings for the bands. Danny's role in the *SBS Whatever* music project grew from there [This ended up in the release of a CD and a website in 2003]. SBS wanted

been contracted by SBS to record, release and promote the records. They are contributing studio time and some modest manufacturing and promotion budgets for each release, it is up to us build each album from the ground up.'

Because of Jumpertz's studio expertise, Feral Media is considerably more than just a record company – it is a studio and production facility as well, all housed in a inner-city warehouse in Sydney. 'The studio at our warehouse is central to the label: it's the admin and sonic headquarters,' explains Jumpertz. 'We can mix and track in a beautiful big room, and we can present our bands to friends. We're set up and portable if need be. But there are other studios integral to us. Over the past three years I've spent hundreds of hours tracking and mixing in the SBS multitrack rooms in Melbourne (Federation Square) and Sydney (Artarmon). Nearly all our mastering is done by Greg Seiler (Comatone) at Blue Mountain Sound (formerly Soundview) and many of our artists are also producers who make their music at home studios. Having access to other specialised spaces is very advantageous to the label, and having that production expertise in house is absolutely essential to Feral Media because the sound of our releases is very important to the label. We want to do

the right thing by each production whether it be lo-fi in its approach or super high fidelity. Often our releases are hybrids, in that they've been part-recorded in home studios on computers, then taken elsewhere to improve the sound. There are advantages in the freedom of home studios, but they often fall down when it comes to monitoring – if you can't hear it you can't fix it. In the next couple of years we'll develop the studio further and move into in-house mixing and mastering.'

This DIY, all in-house/in-community attitude is core to the ethics of the label. Chisholm has brought strong, practical eco-politics to the label's operations. 'Once I started helping Danny more and more, I kind of pushed my green agenda more strongly,' she says. 'It springs from my basic belief that everyone could (and should) be doing more (as in using less and just being more conscious and aware). The world's resources are limited: the more that I consume (or waste), the less there is for everyone else ... Now, reconciling this with a business where you are producing stock to be sold is quite a feat, especially when your medium (CDs) is based entirely upon noxious and damaging petrochemicals. Despite this we are doing what we can to reduce the amount of plastics and other non-renewable/toxic resources used by Feral. We are in the process of moving towards completely plastic-free packaging, and eventually towards digital downloads for all our artists, thereby reducing physical shipping of articles and also the production of the CDs themselves ... Working with Sopp Collective – our designers – has helped. In particular, Thorsten Kulp from Sopp has a heightened sense of environmental awareness. It's great when

you meet people that share your concerns and you can work with them; people who aren't just happy to consume without any thought, as so many of our generation seem to be. The same goes for working with grass-roots and community organisations (publications like *Cyclic Defrost*, radio like FBI and 3RRR, collectives like Sopp and so on).'

Likewise, Jumpertz's commitment to growing emerging local artists that can be tracked back to his first ventures in community radio in the 1980s. 'Our philosophy is to find artists and bands when they are just starting out, and help them to grow and develop as artists, as well as build their recording and performing credentials,' he says. 'We're not really interested in just a one album release, because all of our artists are doing debut albums, and so we'd want to work with them as they grow from the ground up ... I really enjoy working with bands in the early stage of their artistic development, when the possibilities are limitless and the sonic limitations not yet defined. Greg Seiler is a good example – a brilliant young artist already, who will only get better with time, but who we feel benefits by the (dare I say) nurturing atmosphere, help and support that Feral can provide. It's a symbiotic relationship – we need these great, enthusiastic musicians to help us build the label, and we can assist them with our vision and our efforts to get their music out there and build the profile of what we, and they, are doing. As a result, our financial input into any release is usually dependent on the resources of the artist. Sometimes we pay for just about everything: production, mastering, art, manufacturing and promotion, but Feral Media's primary input is often in production co-ordination (recording, mixing, mastering) and design and packaging. We are also doing the promo work ourselves now. Of course, being a young label, we are in a building stage at the moment – investing more than is being returned in dollar terms. I think that by the time this crop of artists are on album numbers two and three, we'll be doing okay.'



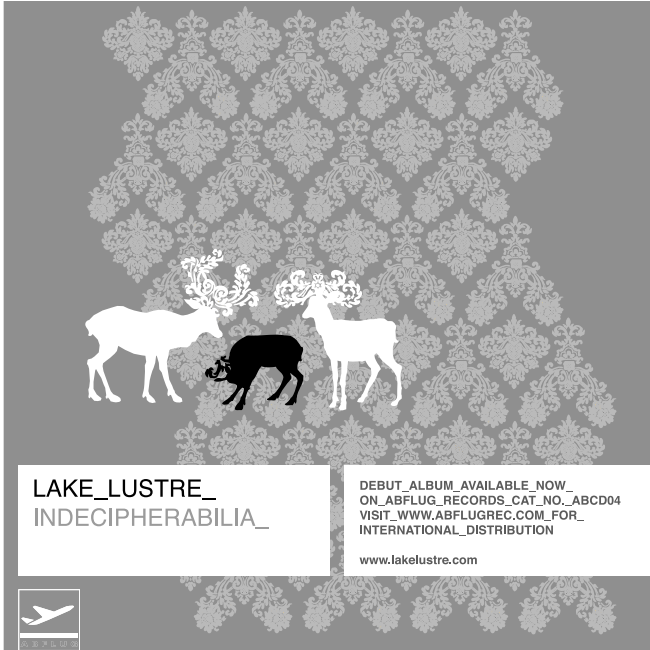
## WE WERE ALL WEIRD STUDIO GEEKS, GRABBING ALL THE OVERNIGHT BOOKINGS IN THE UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Things are naturally beginning to grow. 'We're already working with a UK-based label/distributor at the moment to do some vinyl pressings of some artists as a way of introducing the label's sounds into Europe. [It seems that] vinyl is more viable in markets bigger than Australia, and some distributors have told us they'll actually move way more vinyl for us than CDs [because the market is flooded with CDs]. Likewise Plankton have been courted by a Japanese/UK label, Third Ear, and there is some strong interest in the first two Comatone albums from the US and Europe. We're also working on US distribution with a scarily large company ... the economies of scale are just so different on the global stage and we're in no mad rush. It's a matter of baby steps and meeting people in the flesh before we commit to things, which is why we're trying to integrate an annual northern hemisphere jaunt into our calendars.'

**Feral Media have a number of releases scheduled for 2005 including Danny's solo project Alpen in July. They're distributed by MGM.**

**Feral Media can be found at [www.feralmedia.com.au](http://www.feralmedia.com.au)**







LAKE\_LUSTRE\_  
INDECIPHERABILIA\_

DEBUT ALBUM AVAILABLE NOW  
ON ABFLUG RECORDS CAT. NO. ABCD04  
VISIT [WWW.ABFLUGREC.COM\\_FOR\\_INTERNATIONAL\\_DISTRIBUTION](http://WWW.ABFLUGREC.COM_FOR_INTERNATIONAL_DISTRIBUTION)  
[www.lakelustre.com](http://www.lakelustre.com)



## Combat Wombat

Interview with Monkeymarc

by Dan Rule

# BURROWED BEATS

A QUICK BROWSE THROUGH THE ANNALS OF RECENT MUSIC HISTORY UNEARTHS A GLUT OF ARTISTS – HIGH PROFILE OR OTHERWISE – WHO HAVE BEEN QUICK TO HITCH A RIDE ON THE ‘PROTEST SONG’ BANDWAGON. BUT IF WE’RE TO DELVE A LITTLE DEEPER, WE’LL SOON FIND THAT COMPARATIVELY FEW HAVE STEPPED BEYOND THE CRED-BUILDING GUISE OF THE PRACTICE: A VAGUELY PERTINENT PHRASE HERE, THE ODD PEACE SIGN THERE. THE ‘PROTEST SONG’ AS SUCH, WHILE OFTEN PURE IN CONVICTION, HAS TIME AND AGAIN PROVEN ITSELF TO BE DETACHED BY PLACE, CONTEXT AND PERSPECTIVE. MELBOURNE-BASED CREW COMBAT WOMBAT BREAK THIS MOULD. WITH THE AID OF THEIR ECOLOGICALLY-FRIENDLY LAB RATS SOLAR POWERED SOUND SYSTEM, THEY ARE TAKING A CREATIVE APPROACH TOWARDS ACTIVISM AND A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TOWARDS MUSIC. BUT WITH A NEW RECORD THAT ADDRESSES ISSUES AS FAR RANGING AS AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY, REFUGEE RIGHTS, US MILITARISM AND DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT, IS HIPHOP THE MOST EFFECTIVE THEATRE FOR THEIR MESSAGE?



It's a freezing night in the former industrial city of Newcastle, 200kms north of Sydney. It is the middle of the 2004 This Is Not Art festival, and a storm is in. As we make our way towards the festival club – huddled in scarves and beanies – huge gusts of wind rip through trees overhead and all manner of debris scuttles and dances down the street. Crossing the train line, which runs behind the club, we notice a van parked on the street opposite, and can't help but saunter over for a look. The vehicle is, well, less than conventional. In fact, painted in its camouflage greens, blues and browns, it could easily be mistaken for a prop from the movie *Mad Max*.

It's adorned in all manner of bits and bobs – solar panels of all shapes and sizes cover the roof and a tiny wind turbine juts out from the bullbar, whirling at a terrifying speed in the gale. Someone says something about Doctor Who and we laugh, not knowing what to think. The rain comes, and we run for the club.

At the time, I had no idea that the van housed the infamous Lab Rats Solar Powered Sound System. I had no idea that it was powered by vegetable oil instead of diesel, or that the wind-turbine was the power-source for a small cinema. I also had no idea that Monkeymarc and Izzy, of Melbourne activist-hiphop crew Combat Wombat, developed and built the rig.

Chatting on the phone from Sydney, where he is visiting family, Monkeymarc (born Marc Peckham) breaks into giggles at the memory of that windy Newcastle night. 'That was an amazing storm,' he laughs. 'And the wind generator was tied on to the bumper in a fairly bodgie way. But it was incredible – like, it charged my batteries in half a day.'

The Lab Rats van is somewhat symbolic of Combat Wombat's wider approach to music and activism – an organised hotchpotch of DIY resourcefulness, independence and imagination. Indeed, while their political direction is indelibly strong, the crew's message isn't one of negativity

or pessimism – it's about being proactive and creative – and their dub-infused hiphop excursions lend some weight to this. As Marc explains, while plenty of MCs are willing to posit the ills of the world, not many are willing to get their hands dirty working on a solution. 'It's all about trying to create an alternative,' he says. 'It's not just about the negative aspects of where this society is going; it's about where we can take it as an alternative and how we can work these things out if we put our minds to it. Hopefully our music is subverting the dominant paradigm and can break through. It's honest – it's honest music – and if people can see that, hopefully they'll react to it.'

Marc developed a social and political awareness at an early age. He attributes this, in part, to his Welsh heritage. 'Being Welsh, you can't help but be political,' he states. 'The Welsh have been persecuted for years by the English, like a lot of countries out there. For example, it was illegal to speak Welsh in Wales until 1956. So there's always been a strong sense of pride in being Welsh in your own country.'

But there was another instance, when his family was living in the Middle East, which he believes may have had a more prominent impact. 'I remember being eight years old in Yemen during the huge clashes between the PLO and Israel in the early '80s,' he recounts. 'We'd watched streams of refugees coming down the streets, with Yasser Arafat at the front; just these displaced people, people bandaged up with old t-shirts and things like that. I can still remember being stunned by that. It was like, "Wow, something's not right about this." It really opened my eyes to the ways of the world. I've always been very community-minded and politically motivated. It just becomes stronger the more and more you see.'

The band and the sound system both found their roots in activism, during the 1998 anti-uranium mining campaign at Jabiluka in the Northern Territory's Kakadu National Park. 'I'd just left Sydney and Izzy was already up in

## **'THE EXHAUST SMELLS LIKE WHATEVER YOU'VE PUT IN IT,' LAUGHS MARC. 'THE FIRST BATCH OF OIL WE GOT FOR IT WAS ACTUALLY OLD DONUT OIL. IT SMELT REALLY GOOD.'**



Jabiluka,' remembers Marc. 'She had this whole solar-powered sound system that she had hooked-up to this old quad-bike – a four-wheeled pedal bicycle. It was basically pedal- and solar-powered. I arrived with my decks and my mixer, a sampler and an 808 drum machine, and that was kind of the start of Lab Rats and Combat Wombat.'

Interestingly, their initial collaborations were quite a departure from their current warped hiphop grounding, instead taking their bearings from abstract and experimental electronics. 'The first time we met we didn't really say anything to each other,' says Marc. 'We just plugged in an 808 and 303, and Izzy was just doing these weird noises. She had a delay pedal and an outfit she'd put on – her whole outfit was made of bicycle rubber – and we just jammed, you know. She was just basically making vocal noises into this delay pedal, and just delaying out and feeding back. Every now and again she had political rhymes that she'd lay down, but they were very delayed and very mutated. I had the 303 strapped to my arm and Izzy was just doing her thing. That was the very start of Combat Wombat – it was dark, electro noise kind of stuff.'

Marc and Izzy acquired the van around the same time. After attaching three 80-watt solar panels to the roof – which are used to fill a bank of three 12-volt batteries – and installing the sound system inside, they began one of many trips

around the country, blockading protest sites and playing free shows for weary activists. But they soon realised the multimedia potential of their rig. 'We ended up out in the South Australian desert, blockading the Roxby Downs uranium mine with [local Aboriginal leader] Uncle Kevin. The solar sound system sort of grew, and we bought ourselves this wind generator and started a wind-powered cinema for all the tourists and locals out there. We were making movies about the Aboriginal genocide issue and the uranium issue out there, and there was no real way for us to get the message across. So we figured the best way was through our own little wind-powered cinema.'

'Soon after that,' he continues, 'we were sent a film by this fella who was helping out with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army in Papua New Guinea. That's when we discovered you could run your vehicle on coconut oil. There was this scene with these guys driving around in their coconut oil-powered car, and we thought that was pretty cool. At the time, they had all these trade sanctions, so they had no petrol and no diesel, so it was the only thing they could do. So then we developed our own little way of running our car on veggie oil.'

Salvaging an extra fuel tank and other basic equipment from desert scrap yards, Marc and Izzy did their own conversion for virtually no cost. It consisted of installing a new fuel system for the oil – as one would with a standard dual-fuel LPG vehicle. The oil is pre-heated in its tank by a copper coil that runs from the radiator. This thins the oil, making it suitable for fuel, which is then pumped via an extra fuel line to the motor. The van only needs to be run on diesel when first started (to pre-heat the veggie oil tank) and before being turned off (to clean out the motor). And aside from the environmental positives of avoiding fossil fuels, there are a couple of other, err, more pleasurable benefits. 'The exhaust smells like whatever you've put in it,' laughs Marc. 'The first batch of oil we got for it was actually old donut oil. It smelt really good.'



Combat Wombat really began to take shape as a band in 2000, when Mark and Izzy found themselves living in a squat in inner-city Sydney. 'We had this warehouse out the back that became known as the Pigeon Poo Palace,' laughs Marc, 'and that's where we started jamming with Elf Tranzporter. We were doing heaps of free parties and Reclaim The Streets parties at the time. So he'd just rock up and start doing some rhymes, and we just started up this friendship.'

Merging his own expansive sensibilities – Marc describes his influences as ranging from funk and soul to reggae/dub and techno – with Elf's harder hip-hop dynamic and Izzy's inventive flows, Combat Wombat had soon written their first song as a crew, for which they had a somewhat unlikely audience. 'Elf was like: 'I've got this gig on [national free-to-air network] Channel Seven for this music program and you should come on with me.' We were just laughing, because it was the total opposite of what we were thinking. So we wrote this track called 'Miraculous Activist' and loaded it with as many kinds of political slogans as we could. We were like, right we're on

Channel Seven – lets just blast them with our ideas as much as we can. So our first real performance as Combat Wombat was on a Channel Seven music program... (much laughter)... it was like this full-on political song.'

Nevertheless, their message wasn't broadcasted unchecked. 'Of course, it was heavily censored,' says Marc. 'The song was about four-and-a-half minutes long, but by the time Channel Seven got hold of it and cut up the footage of us performing live, they chopped it down to about a minute-and-a-half. They'd taken everything out of it – you know, there were lines about Nike exploitation of workers, Shell drilling hell – and none of that was in there. But they left in the stuff about cops selling smack and stuff (laughs). It seemed fairly obvious who the program sponsors were.'

Buoyed by the musical direction of the track, they went on to record their debut album, *Lab Rats Solar Powered Sound System*, which featured 23 tracks of skewed hip-hop, drum'n'bass, breaks and powerful political rhymes. Their new record *Unsound System* was released through Australian independent label Elephant Traks in March and sees the crew – with the help of DJ Wasabi – work on some more experimental and abrasive sounds. Largely written on the road using solar and wind, it was recorded at Melbourne's Container Studios by hip-hop group TZU's Seed MC. The results are impressive. Eerie samples and loops slot amongst an underpinning of bass-heavy beats rhythms, and ceaselessly political rhymes punctuate both playful and darker tracks. Elf Tranzporter's smooth, fluid style acts as a solid counterweight for Izzy's short, sharp vocal stabs, while a diverse bunch of high-profile guests – Chris Mutiny (Mutiny), Seed MC (Tzu), Ozi Batla (The Herd) and Raceless (Curse Ov Dialect) – make solid lyrical contributions. 'We're such a funny, bodge little crew who just do our own thing,' says Marc. 'We've just been so lucky with the people we've been able to work with.'

A browse over the track list is enough to suggest an idea of the record's thematic direction, with 'Displaced Peoples', 'Alternative Energy', 'Lost Paradise', 'Police Brutality', 'Corruption Dub' and 'Human Shields' sit amongst numerous others. 'Redneck Shock Jock' is perhaps one of the more disturbing tracks. Utilising samples of super-rightwing Adelaide radio talkback host, Bob Francis, it paints a worrying picture of ignorance and bigotry within segments of mainstream society.

'Bob Francis is the biggest shock jock on radio in Adelaide, and the song is pretty much unadulterated,' explains Marc. 'I mean, it's edited to get short grabs out of it,' he's full-on. He's like the anti-activist; he's amazing. Bob Francis ... bloody hell (laughs).'

But more interesting is the way in which Marc

acquired the samples. 'Bob Francis was brought to my attention by a friend of mine, who's a great fella from Adelaide who I met through activism. He lives in this house with 300 TVs and about 60 radios; the house is jam-packed and the floorboards are bending under the weight. Essentially, since the Gulf War, he's recorded every single news program from every single channel, every single radio shock jock and news service. He's got videocassettes piled to the ceiling, cassette tapes to the roof – he's set up computers recording stuff and multiple video cassettes working all at the same time. You walk into the house and you can just feel the radiation (laughs). He's always wanted to do something with this stuff. People think he's pretty mad, but we just clicked. He's like the ultimate crate dig for a DJ.'

'Every now and again I'll go over there or he'll visit me in Melbourne, and I'll ask him for a best-of from a particular period, channel, or an issue, and he'll just go bang, there it is. He'll edit it all down so I just have an hour of the absolute best stuff, then I'll chop it down into a two minute song.'

But with such a commitment to activism and driven political approach, is the fairly inaccessible realm of left-of-centre hip-hop the best medium through which Combat Wombat can spread their message? Is *Unsound System*, while noble in its ambition, just another case of preaching to the converted?

'I did have a sense of that on the last album,' Marc posits. 'And I knew that in a way that was a good thing, because there was this whole inner circle going on from the Lab Rats thing and people understood what we were about. But this album feels a lot broader and more worldly, even more mature. We really wanted to spread the message wider with this record, so we really tried to spend a lot more time, and put more energy, into the way the whole thing sounded. And I feel like the message is going to go a lot further.'

'Groups like Public Enemy were quite underground in their early days, but they pushed it further and the production level rose, and even though the politics were still real and in your face, the music became funky dancehall music. It's that revolutionary aspect of putting out stuff that has a really strong message but has music so infectious that you just can't ignore it, no matter what your politics are. That's the key to where we're trying to go.'

Combat Wombat's album *Unsound System* is out now on Elephant Traks through Inertia.

[www.elephanttraks.com](http://www.elephanttraks.com)  
[www.combatwombat.org](http://www.combatwombat.org)





**Autechre**  
**Interview with Sean Booth**  
 by Peter Hollo



# PIONEER MUSIC

**SEAN BOOTH SOUNDS LIKE HE'S JUST RUSHED IN WHEN HE PICKS UP THE PHONE — AND FOR GOOD REASON. HE SPENT THE NIGHT HOUSESITTING FOR A FRIEND WHOSE PLACE HAD BEEN BROKEN INTO WHILE THEY WERE AWAY — A DISTURBING OCCURRENCE BECAUSE IT'S SO RARE IN THE COUNTRY TOWN IN SUFFOLK (NORTH-WEST OF LONDON) WHERE HE LIVES.**

'I grew up in Middleton, which is part urban, but it backs onto local farms and such, so it's a bit of both up there — old-school working class, I suppose. I wouldn't say I was a city gent; I mean I used to spend a lot of time in Manchester when I was growing up because it was only about seven miles away.'

He then lived in Sheffield (home of Warp Records) for some years, but when Autechre's other half, Rob Brown, moved to London he decided to find himself somewhere closer there. 'Rob's lived in London since 1998,' he explains. 'But in terms of working together, when we started out we used to live about eight or nine miles apart, and usually by the time we'd finished working it was too late to get a bus home, so I'd just walk. I'm kinda used to having a bit of a distance, but these days we're only an hour-and-a-half away from each other, so it's kinda like me living in London, except that it's ... not London!'

Having that distance between them isn't a big deal. 'We've always worked separately,' says Booth. 'The Autechre thing is kinda like a crew name — sometimes I do tunes and Rob really likes them, and they come out as Autechre. Sometimes Rob does tunes and I really like them. Sometimes we do a bit and then we hand each other the bit, or we're in the room together, and we hand it back and forth. There's never a set way that we work together — we do it every

single way we can. We're both interdisciplinary; there are no set areas of expertise. We do have slightly different aesthetic tendencies, and we're quite good at capitalising on those differences, but it's a completely adaptive process. It could just be: turn on one piece of equipment, hit a pad and go on with that sound for a while, or it can be sitting down for ages building something to use.

'In Sheffield I was living in a warehouse, and it was like, you'd get up at 11am, look out your window — all bleary because you'd been caning it or whatever — and there's just loads of people going about their business. Look out the back and there's this factory, milling, constantly — all you can hear is a bandsaw, just going for it. For four years, it starts to grind you down. It's irritating basically, constantly seeing adverts for products, and people going about what basically seems like quite boring business to you because you're trying to reach some kind of creative spot.

'I find it loads easier to write tracks out here because there's so much space, and so little contemporary culture — I look up and all I see is farms and trees and the occasional kid wearing a baseball cap. I've never drawn all that much from contemporary culture — I've always ignored it, or tried to. I like to have windows open and like to be able to see what's going on in the outside world; I don't like to have my blinds down all day.

Autechre's methodology encompasses everything from analogue acid to digital crispness, generative techniques to intricate programming. It can be hard to pin down the sources in their music, but 2001's *Confield* certainly brought the algorithmically-generated structures to the fore. 'The generative stuff — some of it's process-based; a track like 'VI Scose Poise', for example, is completely process-based. That was a process made in Max [a program for creating sound-generating and -processing objects from the ground up] as a kind of sequencer, spitting out MIDI data. It was built just to run. It had various counters that would instigate various changes in the way the patch. We'd hit "Start" and listen to it, and if it did something wrong we'd change whatever variable it was that was making it go wrong, then run the process again. This was completely hands-off.

'Then a track like 'Uviol' was made using a sequencer we'd built that changed what it was generating according to parameters we set with faders, so we'd spend a lot of time building it very soberly, and then we'd spend a lot of time very un-soberly playing it. A lot of the tracks on *Confield* are like that — they're basically made in real-time using sequencers where we'd spent a lot of time making this thing that would generate music according to a few set parameters, and then we'd mess around with the parameters in order to make the music later, when we were in a different frame of mind.

'*Draft 7.30* is very different, because it's almost 100 per cent composed, with very little playing or real-time input or anything. *Untilted* is different again, it's basically loads of different sequences all running together. We've used so many hardware devices this year compared to *Draft 7.30* – on *Confield* there are a few hardware bits and pieces, a few analogue sequences being used there as well. On *Untilted*, it's basically everything – bits of drum machines, old MIDI sequencers, old analogue sequencers, MPCs, basically the whole gamut of equipment we've had around us for ages, but used in slightly different combinations – in some ways more traditional, in some ways less so.'

Autechre seem to have gotten excited about going back to these roots after intensive use of computers and algorithms. 'The thing about a lot of analogue kit is that you haven't got that opportunity for review, and you can basically sit there and drift off into another world – just get on with doing the tune – and it's the same with a lot of MIDI sequencers. For me, a lot of interfaces that don't give you a screen to look at – don't give you a time-line to deal with – are more conducive to making music that's well-paced. Most of our best work has been made on non-timeline

sequencers. We still use timeline, especially for editing audio, but for working with MIDI it can be a bit stagnating. I don't tend to use the computer a lot these days.

'We do play keyboards sometimes – for beats and stuff as well. We have pads in here, keys, loads of MIDI controllers – basically our studio's just a massive interface, tables covered in input devices. I really like physical interfaces; when we first bought the Nord Lead, it was the interface that did it for me. The storability, and the fact that it didn't quite sound analogue, just didn't come into it. The interface was so amazing; I could get so much done in such a short time, compared to any other virtual analogue synth around at the time – and it also sounds amazing, for what it is. I just love touching stuff and listening to it; I don't like mouse control, controlling knobs and faders on a screen. I can still write stuff just inputting data, but I quite like being able to play it.

'Sometimes I'll just play the beats, and sometimes it'll be mad editing; sometimes a bit of both, or it'll be a process that's then been edited into something that sounds musical. A lot of the electronic music I hear these days seems to be people who only know two or three ways of doing things – they don't tend to vary their method very much. They're over-commodifying themselves in a way, like they need to have a big trademark on everything they're doing. It's very habit-based, and the kind of thing I

try to shy away from, I *tend* to shy away from anyway.'

It's hard to get Booth to talk about whether Autechre try to communicate anything with their music or whether they even think about the listener when making their music. For a member of a duo whose music has an immense emotional impact on many of their fans, Booth is reluctant to impute any emotional content, or so it seems. He is, however, a fanatic about sounds as sounds.

'A lot of our music *is* sample-based. The samples might not be immediately obvious, but that's the way we like it really. I'm into physical modelling – everybody is these days – but if I'm working with models I prefer to do it in non-realtime situations, or using devices that have been specifically geared around giving you very little access to the parameters necessary to control the model. It might sound counter-intuitive but it makes sense in terms of writing music. It really depends on what's available at the time. I'm really into modelling just as a science, so I can do it on a Nord and a couple of effects units; I can make samples that sound like breakbeats. Sometimes we'll sample sounds that sound like they've been synthesised, because they're so bizarre, and yet they're natural.

'I don't know that we've ever considered ourselves to be sample-based or not. I like the way all the sounds sit together. There are a lot of samples on *Untilted* – some of them obvious, and some of them not, regardless of your



**AIR, The Association of Independent Record Labels** is Australia's music industry association dedicated to supporting the growth and development of independent labels nationally and internationally.

We're here to actively lobby, advocate and facilitate deals that benefit the industry, and we also provide a range of services that can help you do business.

**Great rates on CD Pressing & Duplication**  
500 discs pressed from \$985 (inc GST)

**Grant Brokering for your arts & music projects**  
Expert advice and assistance when applying for funding for your next music projects

**Electronic Music Charts**  
Australia's only monthly charts dedicated to independent Australian electronic music

**International Trade Shows**  
Members co-exhibit with AIR at trade shows including Popkomm (Berlin) and MIDEM (Cannes, France)

**Radio Samplers**  
We produce 24 samplers a year across all styles of music for distribution to Australian community radio in coordination with AMRAP (Australian Music Radio Airplay Project)

**Workshops & Seminars**  
Get the skills and strategies necessary for success in the music business through AIR Pocket, our music business development program held in capital cities Australia wide.

**Compilations**  
Specific compilations to promote new electronic music to international markets, as well as Australia's electronic music industry

\* Membership is open to all Australian owned labels, distributors and self-released artists.

Become a member! Call Stephen Foster on (07) 3257 1838, email [info@air.org.au](mailto:info@air.org.au) for more info or visit the web [www.air.org.au/membership](http://www.air.org.au/membership) and fill in the online application.





IT'S LIKE IF YOU WERE TO TAKE A LITTLE PICTURE OF A MOUNTAIN THAT YOU HAD EMBROIDERED, AND REPEAT IT TWENTY TIMES, IT WOULDN'T BE A PICTURE OF A MOUNTAIN REPEATED TWENTY TIMES – IT'D BE THIS WEIRD PATTERN. THAT MEANS NOTHING ... BUT IN A WAY, MAYBE IT MEANS EVERYTHING.

history, because of what we've done to them. For *Confield* we used loads of drum machines and analogue kit on there, but that's the thing: because of people's perception, they kind of just stare past it. 'They're using a DMX on there? It can't be a DMX because the beats are going all over the shop!' Well, they're doing that because it's plugged into this delay that's being re-triggered by its own output, and the delay's from about 1983 too.

I remember being in a studio years ago. We'd met Daz [Darrel Fitton aka Bola] when he was working in a music shop, and he'd let us use some of his equipment. We were messing around with this Ensoniq keyboard that had this sound on there that could've been a piano

through a chorus, but it wasn't really – it was really obscenely bent up. As I was messing around with it, this kid came upstairs and was going, "What you doing there?" I was like, "I dunno, I'm really feeling this sound for some reason," and I'm laughing 'cause it was a preset, and he was like "Oh, what, *chorused piano*?" And I remember thinking, "It's not just chorused piano, it's fucking weird," but the fact he'd identified what it was, in literal terms, meant that I just had to accept his description of it. So many musicians I meet these days are like that – you know, so happy to have tagged something it is that you've done, or somebody's done, in a track: "He's just compressed his kick drum." And you're going, "He's not just done that; I mean what compressor is he

using? That sounds fucking weird, have you heard the attack time on that?"

There's more anal things to be said about it sometimes.

A lot of the time it's because we don't advertise our methods very much. When we do they're really transparent, but often you don't really realise what the source is of what you're listening to – that's not the point of what we're doing. We're trying to just make things be what they are. It's like if you were to take a little picture of a mountain that you had embroidered, and repeat it twenty times, it wouldn't be a picture of a mountain repeated twenty times – it'd be this weird pattern. That means nothing ... but in a way, maybe it means everything. If

Autechre's music is about anything, it's about pushing the boundaries, making the familiar unfamiliar, and maybe repeated embroidered mountains is the perfect metaphor.

I mean, context – it's one of those weird things. I've never understood how people hear what we do. It's like chucking rocks in a pool, looking at reactions to what we do – it's strange. Some people say, "It's really great," and some say, "I fucking hate this, what's all the fuss about?" Well it's like "fuss" ... at least someone's making a fuss.



Autechre's splendidly named album *Untilted* is out now on Warp through Inertia

## ELECTROFRINGE'05 NEWCASTLE SEPT 29-OCT 03

**Electrofringe** is a hands-on, all-in, new media arts festival dedicated to unearthing emergent forms, highlighting nascent trends & encouraging young & emerging artists to explore technology & its creative possibilities. *Electrofringe is part of the annual This Is Not Art Festival - Newcastle, Australia*

### ««« EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST »»»

For panels, workshops & masterclasses.  
+ limited opportunities for exhibitions, gigs & events.

Areas for investigation may include (but are not limited to) wireless, wearable, web, sound, video, networked & online collaborations, software, art & science, robotics, custom electronics, audio/visual, experimental interfaces, media based installations, performance & hybrid practices.

'Australia...where?' is a new initiative stimulating cross-cultural exchange between Australia & Asia. 'Australia ...where?' is seeking expressions of interest from emerging Australian new media artists with an Asia-Pacific concern.

>>> To apply visit [www.electrofringe.org](http://www.electrofringe.org) & submit a completed webform by 01 August 2005 <<<

**ELECTROPROJECTIONS** screening program is calling out for boundary pushing works for film, video, animation & beyond.

Send submissions on DVD-PAL to  
**ELECTROPROJECTIONS**  
2/25 Golden Grove Street  
Darlington NSW AUSTRALIA 2008

[www.electrofringe.org](http://www.electrofringe.org) | [www.thisisnotart.org](http://www.thisisnotart.org)





Keith Fullerton Whitman/Hrvatski  
Interview with Keith Fullerton Whitman  
by Ron Shepper

# SOUND ADVISOR

KEITH FULLERTON WHITMAN CONTAINS MULTITUDES, OR AT LEAST (ACCORDING TO THE FOLKS AT HIS RECORD LABEL, KRANKY) PERSONAE ENOUGH TO EMBRACE 'HYPER-PROGRAMMED RHYTHMS AND CONCRETE SOUNDS, BLEEDING FREAK-OUT GUITAR, BEACH-BOYS STYLE SWEET HARMONY, EASTERN EURO-PROG, VINTAGE SYNTH BURBLES, CLASSIC-ERA MINIMALISM, EARLY MAINFRAME COMPUTER MUSIC, FLUXUS-LINEAGE BORDERLINE NONSENSE, COMPLETE AND UTTER CHAOS, DOOMY CHAMBER POP, AND QUIET MELANCHOLY.' WHILE SUCH A STYLISTIC HODGEPODGE MAY SEEM BEWILDERING, THE NEAR-CONCURRENT APPEARANCE OF THREE NEW RELEASES – *MULTIPLES*, *YEARLONG* (LIVE IMPROVS WITH GREG DAVIS), AND THE HRVATSKI OUTING *IRREVOCABLY OVERDRIVEN BREAK FREAKOUT MEGAMIX* – OFFERS A MICROCOSMIC PORTRAIT THAT ALLOWS THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC TO BE GRAPPLED WITH MORE EASILY. THOUGH ONLY 31, WHITMAN HAS ISSUED A STAGGERING AMOUNT OF MUSIC, WITH COUNTLESS RELEASES AND COMPILATION APPEARANCES UNDER THE HRVATSKI ALIAS (THE CROATIAN WORD FOR 'CROATIAN') ALONE.

But there's considerably more to Whitman than a discography, as was revealed in discussions prior to his departure on a two-week, four-show tour through Scotland, Switzerland, and Hungary (a North American sojourn with Greg Davis and Bird Show (Ben Vida) is scheduled for April). Commenting on the current creative state of his life, he says, 'It's been very good actually. The Mimaroglu shop is doing well, I've finished about ten remixes and the three albums, and have generally never felt better. I feel overwhelmed, but that's never anything to complain about! I'm not sure how much longer I'll be able to pull off the starving artist routine, but then again even the worst day for me now would be better than if I were holed up in a cubicle building MySQL databases of toothpaste brands. I count my lucky stars every day.'

Though Whitman grew up in New Jersey, he's lived in Boston since 1991 and moved to his current Somerville residence (dubbed The Reckankomplex) in 1997 to be close to then-employer Forced Exposure, at that time located

just up the street. Joining him at home is his girlfriend, web designer and photographer Robyn Belair, a Korat cat (named Cleobold 'Gronis' Plornulax née Wilbur), as well as three roommates. Since graduating from the Berklee College of Music in 1995, much of Whitman's recorded material has originated from home, whether from the bedroom (the MathLab), basement (the Tracking Room), or on location with a portable DAW setup. Of the Boston scene itself, he says, 'I wouldn't say I'm a big part of it, but I'm definitely a supporter. I play here maybe five to six times a year, and I occasionally do house-sound for concerts and help with some promotion. The best thing about living here is the amazingly small but very tight-knit scene. There's a fantastic group of people doing very minimal, gestural free-improvisation, another putting on shows for more lo-fi, cassette-culture sound artists, another for psychedelic rock, noise rock, free folk, and, because they're so tiny, there's a lot of cross-pollination.'

## HRVATSKI

While Hravtski has become the most familiar alias, Whitman has used other monikers (most now retired) such as DJ Hekla, Gai/Jin, Anonymous, ASCIII, The Liver Sadness and The Finger Lakes. (Noting that Sonig, the Köln-based label run by Mouse on Mars, has recently re-iterated a four-year-old offer to release an album by Gai/Jin, Whitman says, 'Perhaps I'll take them up on it after all these years. It might be fun to write and record a cathartic in-the-red guitar freak-out boogie record, but I won't know until I try.') In some ways, it appears that Whitman views Hravtski in the past tense too. 'I will keep Hrvatski alive but it's certainly not a priority. In the same way that I would never buy a latter-day Rolling Stones album, or see them in concert, I feel Hrvatski is more of an artifact of the time and place of my youth,' he says. 'The knowledge of how to make that music is still with me, but the desire to continually revisit that reckless abandon of my early twentysomething years diminishes each year as I grow awkwardly into "adulthood." I'd rather the occasional fits of rage and mania manifest themselves in other ways.'

Such comments make the new release (and likely Hrvatski swan song) *Irrevocably Overdriven Break Freakout Megamix* an even more valuable document. Not only is it the debut outing on Entschuldigen, it's also the first live Hravtski release, a 91-track, 41-minute melt-

down recorded in July 2004 at San Francisco's RX gallery, featuring familiar material, unreleased tracks, and reworkings of classic anthems. Inhabiting another universe altogether from the prototypical dance mix, Hrvatski mercilessly flays his oeuvre, coats it with death-metal guitar and other insanity, and stitches it back together as a distorted, assaultive mess. 'Irrevocably... is very special, the first Hrvatski gig I'd played in some time. I was among friends, most of whom were intimately aware of the Hrvatski music, so there was this tendency to focus on "the unknown", not to mention that I was quite drunk, pushing buttons randomly on the control-box, and bringing the volume up as high as it would go. It's probably the loudest CD I've ever released. What's funny about *Irrevocably*... is that it's really split the Hrvatski fan-base down the middle. On one side are the people that enjoy the writing, the melodies, the general "feel" of the music – these are the people that followed me into the Kranky-era. On the other hand, you've got the breakcore folks who love the drum micro-editing and generally don't even notice a bit of grit around the edges. They're all over it.'

Issued in a unique, limited-edition 'trigger-action' package with a custom metallic cardstock insert (each disc includes one of twenty cardstock variations, every one cut on his kitchen table using a Rodahle guillotine), packaging fetishists will be all over it too. 'I actually stumbled across a site that wholesales the Ehlebracht AG Variopac cases,' he says, 'and placed an order for a box to make a small-run CDR edition of "work in progress" pieces for my friends during that trip to San Francisco. I made exactly twenty copies, and gave them only to close friends. Within a few weeks, the CDR was all over a few BitTorrent sites, and I started getting loads of emails from people about getting a 'legit' copy as they'd heard it came in a cool package!'

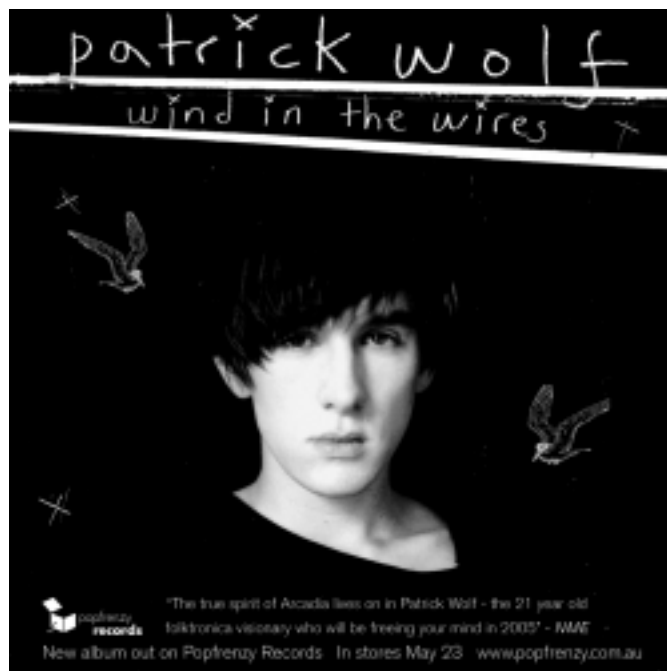
'I actually assembled 1,100 copies of *Irrevocably*... in my living room and kitchen over about two weeks,' he contin-

ues. 'It's never wise to go cheap on packaging when designing a release. Factory-sealed, 4/1 colour jewel-case CD releases are about the most unappealing objects I can think of, especially when it's apparent the producers did everything in their power to both save money and effort. If you want to manufacture something that people will be proud to own rather than download, you have to make it very special.'

His description of *Irrevocably*... as "more Merzbow than Mezz Mezzrow" invariably prompts a question or two about the Japanese noise master. As it turns out, Whitman has been revisiting the entire Merzbow catalogue (including the notorious fifty-disc behemoth), and says that the more he analyses it, the more detail he hears amidst the overload. "I finally scraped up and bought the Merzbox, only to find it on BitTorrent (the entire thing) a week later! So I've populated one of these little mp3-player boxes with the entire set and I walk around listening to it, smiling. If anything, I'm exponentially more impressed with his music having gone through so much of it.'

#### ENTSCHULDIGEN ET AL.

Listeners intimate with Whitman's universe will know of his penchant for unusual name choices; his new label a case in point. 'Entschuldigen is simply the German word for "excuse" or "apologise". Because of the level of activity I attempt to keep up at any given time, coupled with my abysmal organisational skills, the phrase "Sorry for the delay" is unequivocally the one I type the most. I didn't want to continue using the name Reckankreuzungsklangwerkzeuge as I hadn't released anything under that imprint for almost three years when I decided to start physically making records again. (Whitman clarifies that Reckankreuzungsklangwerkzeuge 'was a phrase Wagner uttered in defamation of a saxophone sonata written by Paul Hindemith. I picked it out of Slonimsky's fantastic *Lexicon of Musical Invective*:



 <p><b>TOYDEATH</b></p> <p>Guns Cars + Guitars</p>	<p><b>New CD</b></p> <p><b>Guns Cars +Guitars</b></p> <p><b>PURE ELECTRO-TOY</b></p> <p><b>CIRCUIT BENT</b></p> <p><b>MADNESS!</b></p> <p><b>50% Cute</b></p> <p><b>50% Bloodbath</b></p>
<p><b>AVAILABLE AT</b></p> <p><b>chaos.com</b></p> <p><b>RED EYE RECORDS</b> 66 King St, Sydney</p> <p><b>PAINT IT BLACK</b> Enmore Rd, Newtown</p> <p><b>GASLIGHT MUSIC</b> 85 Bourke, St Melbourne</p>	 <p><b>TOYDEATH</b></p> <p><b>www.toydeath.com</b></p>

*Critical Assaults on Composers since Beethoven's Time* as an early example of "The Establishment" vs "The New Idea", as relevant now as it was then, especially in music.) Despite the fact that I started Entschuldigen out with a Hrvatski release, I plan to release a majority of music by other people.'

Aside from being a residence, the Reckancomplex is also a site, though more a shell for Entschuldigen, Belair's photo gallery and artist pages, Whitman's own artist site, and the Mimaroglu Music Sales mail-order shop (named after composer İlhan Mimaroglu). 'I was, and continue to be, enamoured with Mimaroglu's music and his general sour-puss aura,' he explains. 'He's absolutely one of the most difficult people I've ever met, and he's very quick to dismiss his early works (which are in my mind the penultimate '60s tape pieces) and just about anything else you hold dear. My own repeated attempts to interview him for the liner notes to the Locust label reissue of his Folkways-era music made it clear he wasn't interested in a contemporary appraisal of his '60s work at all. That high level of curmudgeonry is exactly what makes him so appealing – unrelenting in his stubbornness. On top of that it just sounds good; the name just rolls off the tongue.'

## YEARLONG

Completely different in character from *Irrevocably...*, *Yearlong* finds Whitman travelling the globe for electronic improvs with Greg Davis. Recorded between 2001 and 2002 in Germany, Holland, France, and the US, and edited down to an album-length form from eighteen hours of material, some pieces are dense and aggressive while others are quieter and reflective. A long ten-minute setting (recorded at a WNYU radio station) unfurls slowly, the duo allowing the sparse and spacious sounds of steely clatter, tonal glimmers, and tolling bells to meditatively develop. Asked how he feels about his music appearing years after a recording date, he replies, 'I'd like to think that the music on *Yearlong*, and in fact any successful music, is timeless. It's much less an artefact of its era than other music I've listened to recently that was

made during the same time period. At the time, both Greg and I felt we were ahead of the curve, as far as the kinds of processes and algorithms we were using to mutate sounds, and how many of them we could run simultaneously. Right around mid-2001, the Mac PowerBooks had gotten fast enough that one could build a master-patch in something like Max-MSP and run that for the entire set. Previously you would have had to run one program, then quit it or bypass the programs or modules you weren't using while focusing on another. The systems we put together for those shows were very powerful on their own. Couple two systems together, each with real-time capturing, attack-sensing, and processing power, and you've got the capacity to produce very deep, complex music.

'The selection process, once we had located copies of all of the sets we had intended to use, took about eighteen months. There were about six goings back and forth before we settled on the pieces we both liked, and the edits of those pieces that we both felt were the most musically appealing – a very democratic process, much like the sets themselves. I'm still amazed that there's enough of an audience for improvised electro-acoustic music. What's great is that you can follow the progression of the duo from local places like the Berwick Research Institute and Tufts to the last show of that run, which was at a huge festival in Utrecht in front of eight hundred people! We were getting better with each show.'

Asked to clarify how the two prepared, Whitman says, 'We did talk about what instruments we were going to play before each duo set. I had these 'suggestion pads' printed up, and on most occasions I put them at the front of the stage and asked people to fill them out during the opening sets. Before we played our duo, we would take all of the forms out of the box, tally them up, and try to play a duo piece that was the closest to the consensus.' One piece was recorded at the Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, alongside a dance recital by Chantal Yzermans. 'Kurt Ralske was performing live video and asked us to come by and improvise a very minimal piece,' says Whitman. 'I thought it went very well, but the next week there was an article in *The New York Times* about how the music outshone the dance. That was the end of our involvement with the dance world!'

The two are hooking up again on the upcoming tour, suggesting a simpatico relationship between them. 'I find it inspiring to communicate with someone who can be critical of a particular recording of Morton Feldman's *Triadic Memories* while still being excited to find tapes in the lazy Susan of a Texas gas station to listen to for the next leg of the trip! Neither of us rule out any whole genres of music, although there are certainly specific songs and artists that set both of us off.'

## MULTIPLES

Following the release of the EP *21:30 For Acoustic Guitar* (Apartment B), Whitman's association with Chicago's Kranky began, a pairing that has to date yielded four remarkable works. Every piece on *Playthroughs*, the first album issued under his given name, was generated from improvised acoustic-and electric-guitar playing and then digitally processed using ring modulators, granular shuffling algorithms, delays and spectral effects. Veering from sheer drones to tribal drum rituals, the follow-up *Antithesis* collected four 'ensemble' works created from overdubbed instruments (guitar, Fender Rhodes piano, viola, percussion), while last year's often relentless *Schöner Flußengel* (German for 'beautiful river angel') pushed his music into more ominous territory.

If *Irrevocably...* is the hell-raising teenage delinquent, *Multiples* is the mature and better-behaved graduate student. Recorded at Harvard University studios, the album collects eight diverse tracks with material created using vintage synthesizers and electronics. Given that the album was recorded during a lecture posting at Harvard, I asked how the appointment came about. 'Martin (Schmidt) and Drew (Daniels) from Matmos were invited to Harvard in the fall of 2002 for a week-long residency, during which they played a concert and held masterclasses on various matters,' Whitman says. 'They asked me to open for them at the show and help out with the workshops. The concert went very well and I gave a presentation on Max-MSP during one of the classes. We were given free reign of the HUSEAC (Harvard University Studio for Electro-Acoustic Composition), including the Serge and the Buchla systems. Martin and I, after poring through the manuals for arcane patch combinations, recorded around two hours of improvisations which ended up at the centre of the Matmos album *The Civil War* (specifically, the tracks 'Reconstruction' and 'YTTE'). After the residency was over I pleaded with Ean White, the HUSEAC's technical director, about the possibility of using the studio over the following months to compose a long-form work. He agreed, the stipulation being that I would teach a class or two on Max-MSP to graduate music students in exchange. So, they set me up in a classroom and I prattled on for a few hours, showing some Max-MSP "tricks" to the class.'

All of the album's pieces share a similar title style, 'Stereo Music for Farfisa Compact Duo Deluxe, Drum Kit' a case in point. He explains, 'The "Stereo Music" headers stem from the fact that these are all multi-channel pieces, and that the versions on the *Multiples* CD are the stereo "mixdowns." The equipment-list-as-title is not a reflection of any sort of gear-lust; it's purely descriptive – a pre-emptive strike on the "What makes that sound?"



# MY TITLING SCHEME IS RAZOR-THIN ANYWAYS. DURING THE DAY I READ A BOOK, FALL ASLEEP, WAKE UP FROM A NAP AND WRITE DOWN THE FIRST PHRASE THAT POPS INTO MY HEAD. I KEEP A LONG LIST OF THESE, AND, WHEN I FINISH A PIECE OF MUSIC, LABEL IT WITH THE MOST APPLICABLE ONE FROM THE LIST.

questions that always arise when non-traditional instrumentation is used. My titling scheme is razor-thin anyways. During the day I read a book, fall asleep, wake up from a nap and write down the first phrase that pops into my head. I keep a long list of these, and, when I finish a piece of music, label it with the most applicable one from the list. Naming piece of music topically has always been a very hard thing for me to do.

Asked about his composing approach, he says, Almost everything I do starts with a long improvisation session, either in a room with an instrument or on a computer running some sort of DAW (digital audio workstation) package. I stick to the adage that all composition is improvisation – it's certainly the case here. There is a tendency within these pieces to let the form unravel over long periods of time; most pieces started with a recording of a single motif that either remains static or develops slightly over time. You can hear evidence of this on the Disklavier piece. I recorded maybe five different "takes" of the main five-chord line that runs throughout, ranging from six to forty-five minutes, each with varying degrees of build and breakdown. Similarly, the Buchla piece started out by stumbling across the sequence-pattern that runs throughout the second half. Once I locked it in and began modifying the sequence length and notes, I knew something special was happening, so I began recording and improvising different changes and metric modulations until I had a "piece". Overall, I wanted to present a suite of pieces where the formic development was as gradual as

possible without seeming entirely static; that's the bond that ties all five of these pieces together. The Hi-Hat piece, the second segment of the Serge Piece, the Disklavier piece, and the end of the Buchla piece are almost identical in form. The first and third parts of the Serge piece, the Farfisa piece, and the first half of the Buchla piece (incidentally, a 'cover' of the second half played by acoustic guitars) interject between the other pieces. I did the same thing on *Playthroughs*, placing the feedback and acoustic guitar pieces in between the three "traditional" guitar/computer pieces.

One of the album's most distinctive features is the marvellous vintage synthesizer sound showcased in the three-part 'Stereo Music for Serge Modular Prototype'. 'It's a fantastic one-of-a-kind instrument,' he concurs. 'I've experimented with the mass-produced Serge systems that are in production but somehow the original system has much more character. I have a background in synthesis from my days at Berklee, and I have a few synths here at the Reckankomplex, but none of them are modular in the true, patch-cord sense. While it was somewhat intuitive to get going on the Serge, I had to reference the manual constantly. Luckily Jessica Rylan (an amazing local musician, synth-builder, all-around genius-type) had pencilled in a few pages of notes at the end, which I followed near-religiously; that got me on the right path. I approached those sessions at the HUSEAC linearly. The first day I started with four patch cords and experimented to see how many different sounds I could achieve with that limita-

tion. By the end I was patching the Serge out into my Powerbook, through the Altiverb, back into the Serge, into the Buchla, and out into the Pro Tools Rig. I was scrounging under boxes looking for more patch cables!'

When I note Steve Reich's apparent influence in 'Stereo Music for Yamaha Disklavier Prototype, Electric Guitar and Computer,' Whitman says, 'I do listen to Reich's music often, especially *Music for Large Ensemble* and the early tape pieces. I'm not all that fond of the majority of Reich's latter-day work as the concept always seems to outshine the actual writing. When I listen to *Come Out or Piano Phase*, it strikes me that those pieces are pure math; specific concepts such as phasing executed in the most musically appealing way. While there is a real "art" to what Reich did early on, the "process" is the most attractive element.

'I never make a conscious decision to "ape" any one piece of music,' he continues. 'More often than not I'll hear a successful, unique piece of music and wonder why the ideas that make it so never turned into a "movement" or "school" per se. For example, I'm awestruck by a piece called "Images of the Dream and Death" by Akos Rozmann, an epic, ninety-plus-minute tape piece begun in the early '70s and still in progress (the recorded version I have is from the early '90s). When I began composing on the Serge, the overall feel and timing of this piece and Henk Badings' "Kain en Abel" were ringing clearly in my head. I knew I wanted to construct something along the lines of the form of the Rozmann piece (albeit, scaled down), dronier than the Badings (but still episodic).'

Reflecting on his experiences teaching at Harvard and conducting workshops, Whitman says, 'I enjoy teaching and holding workshops! There is always a shroud of mystery over musicians' working methods, which I have no qualms lifting. While I don't think I'd ever hold down a permanent position as a teacher, I enjoy putting forth the attitude that anything's possible. When I was in school there was a prevailing attitude that, in order to make the music or design the sounds I was hearing in my head, I would have to go the Master's route and spend four years developing a large vocabulary of techniques in order to be "well rounded". Well, to this day I still feel like some of the "well rounded" musicians I come into contact with are the ones making the least informed musical choices. The most important concept is defining an identity (or identities) and becoming as singular a musician as you possibly can. This is the message I'm always struggling to put across, that and becoming entirely familiar with as many niches in the history of music as humanly possible. It's not about the tools or the technique as much as approaching each tool or technique informed with a vocabulary of what's come before and what needs to be done.'

Keith Fullerton Whitman's Multiples is out now on Kranky via Inertia  
see [www.keithfullertonwhitman.com](http://www.keithfullertonwhitman.com)

Also, as a bonus, an MP3 of a KFW's live set is at  
[www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com).





# MUSIC REVIEWS

Not so many of our readers picked up on the reference to the mixing board in our new fangled review section – but at least we didn't get any hip-hop headz complaining that their section was titled 'Lows'. Small mercies...

## GAIN:

Chronic electronics: including every imaginable software-based permutation from electro to clicks and cuts.

## HIGHS:

Culture, dahling, culture: Sound art, contemporary classical, jazz, improv, world and elsewhere.

## MIDS:

Strummed, stunned & shunned: From post-rock swankery to metal-solo wankery; from folk to farked, it's pop n rock in all its forms.

## LOWS:

Rumbling and mumbling: Hip-hop, drum'n'bass, reggae and the odd broken beat and/or leg.

## MUTE:

Silence and the absence of it: Ambience, field recordings, outsider, noise, and everything that's unclassifiable.

Chronic electronics:

## GAIN

**AGF/Vladislav Delay**

*Explode*

(AGF/Inertia)

On her lonesome, Antye Greie (AGF) is an artisan who manufactures crackling clicks and cuts that have all the unstable volatility of overloaded circuits. The birthmark perched atop much of Vladislav Delay's works, meanwhile, is that of elongated dub basslines and finely-spun background overtones that scuttle about in surreptitious insect activity. With *Explode*, this pair merges for a moment and conceives a work that bears a paltry resemblance to anything raised by either in the past. For *Explode* dawns heavy-set beats that saunter about with little heed for linear paths, their step slow, weary. The album on a whole, what with its placid, reverberant atmospheres brought to the fore by flitting beats and smears of high frequency noise, does indeed hark back to triphop chapters and alter the plot-line in an esoteric, but engaging manner. Antye's words are wrapped in a pondering spoken-voice that spills out as though these were stream-of-conscious commentaries as to the banalities of contemporary life. She sometimes finds fine phrasings, but more often than not her insights branch out into trite ruminations. One wishes Antye might have found more novel dresses for her observations and, what's more, that the album's progression might have undergone alterations along the way; be that as it may, *Explode*, with its exemplary exhibition of everyday struggles with ennui, articulates endearing, relatable sentiments. Grab a spot of tea, an edition of Georg Buchner's *Leonce And Lena*, or Milan Kundera's *Identity* and enjoy. **Max Schaefer**

**Alva Noto**

*Transall (Transrapid/Transvision/Transspray)*

(Raster-Noton)

The three EPs constituting Carsten Nicolai's Alva Noto *Transall* triptych – *Transrapid*, *Transvision*, and *Transspray* – evidence the customary distinction of Raster-Noton products. The twenty-one minute discs are inserted within double-gatefold cardboard designs, with the respective sleeves displaying texts composed by Ulf Poschardt, Kodwo Eshun, and Marco Peljhan designed to illuminate the recordings' themes. Nicolai indicates that text, image, and vector graphic files were converted into raw audio data and used as source material for the EPs' tracks, with the primary emphasis on rhythm. True enough, there's rarely melody per se, just propulsive interweaves of syncopated funk patterns and tactile electronic sounds. Noto's music impresses for the richness of its cold palette – steely signals, biting bass throbs, prickly starbursts, industrial thrums – plus its marvellous merging of the sensual and cerebral, with Nicolai repeatedly generating hypnotic material using a modicum of means. Listen to how artfully he arranges disparate cold sounds (whirrs, wipes, smears, bass growls) into classic funk patterns in 'J' (*Transvision*), for example, or how 'Future' escalates into a disorienting mass of combustible noise, its layers coming together in a violent clash. Make no mistake: the essence of this material is deep funk, no matter how abstractly presented. When strangled voice fragments writhe amidst slithering bass throbs and squawking splatter in the grimy 'Bit' (*Transspray*), you're hearing metal machine music of a most beautiful kind. **Ron Schepper**

**Chevron**

*Everything's Exactly The Same*  
(Planet Mu/Inertia)

Chevron's latest album veers from 8-bit buzz, tracker-produced chopiness to warm Bola-like bass and sweet blip. Jungle is clearly close to the heart of Jonathan Valentine. This is particularly evident in 'Running Out of Time' and the cheeky 'Rudi The Techno Pioneer' where a rolling bassline trundles along with dynamic breaks all toasted to a Christmas song. Ever so often we are treated to a glimpse of punk sentiment that's cuts short like a noisy child shushed by its parents. Rudolf (the Red-nosed Reindeer) also gets his nod towards the end. Where some tracks may sit within the chopped up amen jungle genre throughout, others will begin with a dark square wave bass, to become in an instant melodic pleasure. Any given track may leap from style to style; one second a Nintendo ditty, the next an atmospheric pool of zero gravity and ambience. 'Time on Kingdom' is liquid – drum signatures change from millisecond to millisecond never disrupting only enticing, like tumbling helplessly through the songs fabric. The highlight of the record is 'Polyphonic Ringtone' which teases with a ringtone version of Kraftwerk's 'Tour de France' only to emerge as a ska influenced electronic pop tune. The album has moments of earlier Planet Mu in the form of the long absent Jega and his grainy but imaginative productions – these are the kinds of records that formed Planet Mu sound.

**Luke Killen**

**Curtis Chip**

*Eating Paste*  
(Ad Noiseam)

Curtis Chip merges bright 8-bit electro melodies with fulminating clatter on his first full-length, a collection that pairs six tracks from his similarly-titled *Zod 12* with seven remixes. Chip is a drummer of long standing, and his background also includes a stint playing bass in a death-metal band, so while the heavy percussive emphasis on many tracks doesn't surprise,

the album also reveals Chip's gift for simple yet memorable melodies. Consider 'Eating Paste' a representative example. Not surprisingly, there's no shortage of shredded clatter and strafing noises, yet the pulverized beats never entirely banish the song's core, a dramatic hook which persists throughout; even when the track escalates to more manic levels, it never loses the melodic glue holding it together. Also noteworthy is 'Happy Days' where Chip floats a lovely string-like figure over ferocious beats. But when the focus shifts too much to pummeling beats and the melodic dimension goes missing ('Cars Are Awesome', 'Head With No Body'), Chip's music impresses less. Some of the remixes similarly focus excessively on beats. Binray's 'Eating Paste' overhaul is dominated by mashed pinball skitter with only skeletal traces of the original melody retained, making it an impressive construction but one ultimately less satisfying than the original. Considerably more satisfying, on the other hand, is Larvae's hip-hop treatment of 'Eating Paste' which finds the original's 8-bit motif now assumed by a robust dub bass line, while Enduser's funky breakcore mix of 'Happy Days' proves an equal to Chip's original. *Eating Paste* is at its best when both Chip and his guests devote equal attention to obsessive beat sculpting and melodic hooks. **Ron Schepfer**

## Flotel

### Kelp

(Cactus Island/Couchblip)

This second outing in the Cactus Island 3 CDR series refreshingly turns away from the standard fare of clattering beats and vague melodies and offers something immediately more subtle and considered. 'The Power of Corridors' starts things off with its almost Gamelan-esque tones, slowly building into a slow groove. 'Stitched Switch' bounces along with a charming almost oriental melody and some lightweight and subtle zaps and blips, with the track meandering to and fro as though it has a mind of its own that is not at all happy with its own structure. 'As Yet Undiagnosed' abandons the grace and subtlety exerted throughout most of this EP, and lets fly with unbridled stutter beats and eerie yet mildly jazzy chord progressions. 'Half An Echo' arrives with bit reduced chords and wistful melodics, and acts like a very effective interlude of sorts, rather than a whole coherent song. **Barry Handler**

## Robert Henke

### Signal To Noise

(Imbalance)

Rob Henke shepherds the travels of one Monolake – a guise under which much of the most fruitful aquatic techno has been harvested these some past few

years. Crafted by pitch-shifting short pulses of filtered noise into a network of granular delays, *Signal to Noise*, however, is a harmonically dense, metallic drone work that, while mimicking the astringent timbres and whirring behaviour of an oncoming monsoon, bears the blemishes of woe, imagination and awe that one often confronts before blustery weather. *Signal To Noise* opens at the eye of the storm; an airy hum is placed alongside quivering shafts of electronics that at once resemble naked leaves shivering in the arms of brisk billowing winds. From this moment, the previously assiduous and ambient drone feeds upon the bustling debris of digital clicks, building in its weight and mass as it fills the aural space like a horde of chanting monks. In its deft patience at weaving extended passages awash of iridescent textures with a delicate, unobtrusive gauze of purring digitalia, *Signal To Noise* bears a certain resemblance to last year's fine ode to winter in Rosy Parlane's *Iris*. Wavering atop fifty-minutes, motifs do often repeat in the progression of each of the three tracks, but each piece does appear to branch out from the mimicking of storms found at the onset. Indeed, the final composition, particularly near the end, is pockmarked by dissonant pitches of static splinters that soar in rolling surges and crisp elongated

tones that coalesce into shrill shards, running the length of each other like knives being sharpened. Though a dash more variety would have endowed this effort with a longer life-span, it nevertheless reaches a ripe maturity and, what's more, exists as a cordial companion for snow-scalloped afternoons, bookmarked by ennui. **Max Schaefer**

## Marc Leclair

### Musique Pour 3 Femmes Enceintes

(Mutek/Creative Vibes)

One can easily imagine the brouhaha that would have erupted had *Musique Pour 3 Femmes Enceintes* (Music For 3 Pregnant Women) been issued under Marc Leclair's Akufen pseudonym, since listeners desperate for more of *My Way*'s chopped radio snippets and crisp micro-house beats will hear very little of that on this latest release. In short, *Musique Pour 3 Femmes Enceintes* is most assuredly not an Akufen album; what it most assuredly is, however, is marvelous; a richly-textured travelogue of tactile ambient soundscaping. Inspired by the pregnancy of his wife and two friends, the project is an ode to the experience of impending motherhood. Divided into nine sections, the work's 72 minutes parallel the stages of pregnancy with the music slowly unfurling in a continuous stream of ambient



**APELL**  
 "Electronically Charged Jazz...  
 the Best Experience one can  
 have Listening to Music"  
 - neufutur.com  
 "Crazy Eccentric Genius"  
 - Stillborn Extreme Music Zine (Italy)  
 "Wild & Completely  
 Unbridled Electronica"  
 - inthemix.com.au  
 Go to [www.apellmusic.com](http://www.apellmusic.com) for  
 mp3 tracks, multimedia, news, the mailing list  
 & to purchase the albums.



[www.sciencegirlrecords.com](http://www.sciencegirlrecords.com)  
 we  
 make  
 computer  
 music



**ollo**  
[WWW.SNARKL.ORG/OLLO](http://WWW.SNARKL.ORG/OLLO)  
 ACCLAIMED FIRST ALBUM "SLEEPER" STILL AVAILABLE FROM WWW.DISTRIBUTION.COUCHBLIP.COM

and more propulsive episodes. Whether by accident or design, the album references the fertile templates of distinctive precursors – Steve Reich, Chain Reaction, the clinical sound fields of Raster-Noton – that Leclair merges with signature elements of his own style. The surging, swirling mass of silken guitars in part six recalls Reich's *Electric Counterpoint*. In section eight, he pairs Chain Reaction's trademark steely burble and rubbery smears with glistening guitar plucks and skipping beats. Akufen devotees will be heartened by the appearance of clipped voice fragments in section five and microhouse ripples in section seven. Of course, Leclair designed the album's musical development so that it would mirror the trajectory of the pregnancy process; hence the opening sections float in a more aqueous, ambient manner while later sections escalate in intensity and propulsion. Ultimately, though, familiarity with the album's concept is hardly necessary as the music impresses splendidly sans any programmatic associations. **Ron Schepper**

#### Dave Miller

*Mitchells Raccolta*

(Background)

Is Dave Miller's beautiful debut album *Mitchells Raccolta* the first 'minimal broken beat' record? While the question, included within press material accompanying the release, might be intended rhetorically, it also astutely highlights one of the album's distinguishing characteristics. The label 'broken beat' refers to off-kilter, syncopated rhythms that suggest traces of jazz, breakbeat, drum'n'bass, and house, but it's also used to describe more broadly a polyglot style that elusively transcends a single genre slot while simultaneously incorporating elements of house, breakbeat, techno, funk, soul, and jazz. *Mitchells Raccolta* satisfies both definitions. Miller's album is woozy illbient-jazz, a narcotised and richly textured brew whose played jazz-funk drum pulses and abstracted chattering of keyboards, guitar, and percus-

sion are anchored by clear-headed bass lines. In some respects, *Mitchells Raccolta* isn't a total departure for Background. Like Miller's, the tracks on db's Peron and Troon EP maintain a similar non-stop flow and focus on detailed textures; the difference – a key one – is that db's tracks are grounded by clearly defined grooves whereas Miller's are more nebulous by comparison. Miller may hail from the relatively isolated locale of Perth, Australia but there's nothing myopic about his album's delectable multi-stylistic fusion. **Ron Schepper**

#### Monoceros

*When I Was A Child I Wanted To Be An Astronaut*

(Expanding)

Barcelona-based Joan Male may have had his plans to be an astronaut when he grew up thwarted somehow, though he's clearly not been deterred enough to forgo becoming a space cadet. Ouch. Cheesy I know, but there is a dreamy, outer-space ambience about Male's skittering clickity beats and warm synthetic pulses that place his work in a similar ballpark to the likes of Boards of Canada or Skam heavyweights Bola. It's all tightly controlled incredibly intimate electronica with fragments of skattery sounds swirling around splintered fuzzy beats and occasionally overwhelmed by dreamy emotive swirls of atmosphere. On his debut album, Male appears to be in thrall of fuzz and tightly controlled static, which he manages to organize and warm up stripping them of their abrasive qualities particularly when placed alongside melodic emotive wisps of synth. It's gentle, warm chilled out electronics fuelled by nervous ticks, clicks and bleeping, and joyful twinkling fragments of warmth. **Bob Baker Fish**

#### Myakaru

*Tammatoru*

(Expanding)

This is the debut album from Estonia's Indrek Tamm and Joel Tammik who together form Myrakaru. This release has a wonderfully lyrically title which sits well with the overall sound this album exudes. Beautifully constructed synth lines and sweeping strings with unobtrusive time keepers form the grounds for this release. Reminiscent of artists like Proem and labels like n5md, this release doesn't have any cutting edge tricks, its about musical composition and analogue sweetness. Ultimately relaxing and soothing but sitting a little too close to borders of IDM territory that have been crossed many times before. **Melinda Taylor**

#### Pablo Dali

*California Grey*

(Meupe)

The story goes that Matt Rosner designs farm machinery on a computer by day, absorbs the terrain of his isolated West Australian home in the evening, and at night transposes the two on his laptop. It perfectly explains the forces at work in this release – a guy separated from city and scene, as comfortable with machines and technology as he is with the bright emptiness and busy detail of nature, but with the headspace to be patient.

Released as a 3' CD by new Perth label Meupe, *California Grey* is Rosner as Pablo Dali, three tracks incorporating 'acoustic guitar and Powerbook manipulations' into spacious sound landscapes, each with a loping pace that requires attentive listening. Tracks are pumped with fresh air then populated with well observed detail, retaining a simple purity throughout. The first track, 'California Grey', begins with a recognizable guitar strum and picking, but is gradually populated by chirps, tweets and the rise and fall of an unsettling warble. I don't see anything Californian or Grey here; I see farm stables at dusk, birds settling into nests, and the eerie quiet that slowly settles over the country as night falls. The

closest thing to compare the second track 'Pastels' to is probably Japanese artist Susumu Yokota's *The Boy And The Tree* album, where sounds seem to breathe, an ancient tale unfurls and we are guided to a comfortable and natural space. If that sounds too new age for you, fear not; Dali has created a personal language of sounds and rhythm adjacent to trends and competitors. To get a copy you should probably fly to Perth. But once you have it you won't need to visit again for a while, because you'll have the perfect souvenir of the pace, the air and the detail of a West Coast experience.

**Bim Ricketson**

#### Plumblin

*Pin Points*

(Hydrogen Dukebox/Inertia)

It's impossible to imagine that the starting point for this incredibly rich melodic work being New York-based Will Thomas armed with a microphone and DAT recorder, attempting to record the ambience of various buildings and structures within New York City. That's because there is such a purity of tone, such an isolation of sounds on *Pin Points*. And the last thing you could imagine in New York is the ability to take to the streets and isolate individual sounds – yet that's apparently what he has done, taking the smaller more interesting sounds and reconfiguring them into melodic, ambient almost minimal interludes. Whilst he clearly has also added more electronically processed bass and beats, he also enlisted the assistance of cello and vocals (for a couple of tracks) in an effort to remove itself from his delicate and quite sublime predecessor *Circles*. What *Pin Points* makes clear is that in producing his gentle webs of electro grooves Plumblin remains heavily influenced by a conceptual framework, his minimal electro grooves comprised from multiple skittery ingredients yet as intended emphasising a much grander at times quite stately whole. **Bob Baker Fish**

## Various Artists

### *But Then Again*

(~scape/Inertia)

Recording artist Pole's own imprint ~scape records has slowly but steadily built a back catalogue that specializes in wonderful juxtaposition, yet retains an enormous amount of depth and emotion, with most artists approaching their work very much from a dub influenced school of thought. The compilation begins with the science fiction dub mastery of Thomas Fehlmann, delivering a piece that is drenched with syncopation and style, sounding surprisingly like a theme tune to a 2005 version of *Blade Runner*. Mike Shannon's 'Remembrance' offers a solid abstract groove that is somewhat spoiled by jumbled and unfocused vocal harmonies. Deadbeat's 'We Like It Slow and Steady' introduces a wonderful swung dub groove, with a stark introduction leading into the lush bliss-out dub of the track proper. Bus and Dabrye's 'What is Paris?' features Tadd Mulinix's signature off-kilter drum programming and sparse funk production trademarks, yet never seems to find its stride. Triola's 'Neuland' features soft drones that counter simplistic chiming melodies and an eventual swung funk feel, whilst Jan Jelinek's 'Western Mimikry' impresses with splintered acoustic elements that help to weave a magnificent and tangled web of timbres and dynamics. A marvellous deconstruction of the source recordings of various guitar elements. Epo bring us 'Doorstep' which deceives at first with synthetic sine kicks, to uncover a PJ Harvey-esque tuneful ditty with effected guitars and grimy warbles. Andrew Pekler and Triosk both contribute wonderful gritty jazz-tinged pieces, with the former utilising junk percussion and murky dissonance to great effect, and the latter making use of warm vibraphones and haunting Rhodes chords. Always well considered, and showing stunning use of constraint, *But Then Again* is a rarity in that it is a label showcase compilation that for once encapsulates the whole idea and notion of a label so perfectly even though it refuses to be constrained to one particular style. **Barry Handler**

## Various Artists

### *Some Paths Lead Back Again*

(The Marcia Blaine School For Girls/Highpoint Lowlife) Brushed aside in perpetual favour of indie rock, Scotland's left-of-centre electronic scene is somewhat of an unexplored coordinate on the contemporary musical map. And after experiencing *Some Paths Lead Back Again*, one might suggest it to be all but an untapped resource. A double CD compilation exposing the new-strain of Scottish experimental electronica – curated by Glasgow stalwarts The Marcia Blaine School For Girls – *Some Paths* is quite the proud and ambitious project. And

the quality of the material is certainly worthy. Izu open both discs to significant effect. The rasping textures and shattering beats of disc one's 'It'll All Be' are just upstaged by disc two's strictly brilliant 'Now Here'. Production Unit, Accrual and MBSFG themselves all make some pleasant contributions, while The Village Orchestra display their more sinister edge through the scything angularity of 'Picnic At Disco Rock'. But Feld surely takes the compile cake – the glacial dynamics and synth underlays of 'Puffin' and 'Beka' are as deftly stunning as anything released in recent years. So with this in mind, we're certainly entitled to ask: does *Some Paths* achieve its objectives? And to that question, I'd have to give a resounding yes. Contiguous and cohesive, the collection is punctuated by a lovely, palatable stylistic diffusion – it deals in mild sonic contrasts rather than jarring friction and dissonance. Without going so far as to ascribe a national canon, a strong sense of communal intent resonates. While some paths may lead back again, this compilation seems to suggest that there's plenty of brilliant musical topography still to map within the Scottish electronic landscape. **Dan Rule**

## Keith Fullerton Whitman

### *Multiples*

(Kranky/Inertia)

In contrast to the frenetic ferocity of *Irrevocably Overdriven Break Freakout Megamix* (released under his Hrvatski moniker), *Multiples* is cool and controlled, with Whitman carefully sculpting sounds in eight pieces. Given that the album was created at Harvard University, one is tempted to label the album academic, an urge bolstered by song titles like 'Stereo Music for Serge Modular Prototype - Part Two.' But labelling it as such would do this captivating music an injustice by imputing to it associations of austerity and inaccessibility; instead, while there's no compromise to the integrity of its abstract leanings, it's both eminently accessible and musical. The gentle overture 'Stereo Music for Hi-Hat' opens the album delicately with muffled cymbal shadings, while synth glimmerings gradually settle into a soft, muffled drone in the equally calming 'Stereo Music for Acoustic Guitar, Buchla Music Box 100, Hewlett Packard Model 236 Oscillator, Electric Guitar and Computer - Part Two' to bring the album to an equally quiet close. The album's most daunting yet perhaps most memorable composition is 'Stereo Music for Serge Modular Prototype,' an 11-minute exercise in spacey soundscaping plus a wonderful showcase for the vintage synthesizer's steely timbre and sonic range. During its three parts, convulsive splatter, ear-splitting tone piercings, and wailing drones commingle – a remarkable array of sound on this equally remarkable album. **Ron Schepper**



# CHEAP:

LESS THAN \$30 A CD INCLUDING POSTAGE

# SIMPLE:

JUST SIT ON YOUR ASS AND WAIT FOR THE POSTIE

# GOOD:

HAND-PICKED SELECTIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

# BUY!

GO TO [WWW.CYCLICDEFROST.COM/CLUB](http://WWW.CYCLICDEFROST.COM/CLUB)

Cyclic Defrost now runs a subscription-based music club that aims to expose members to the kind of great music that regularly gets covered in the magazine, but is notoriously hard to find. The best and most interesting music released locally and from around the world is carefully selected, from obscure gems to slept-on classics and through to pivotal releases; then sent directly to subscribers each fortnight or month.

In addition to this, we supply listening notes, organise regular meetings and facilitate live discussions with the artists, labels and amongst fellow subscribers both online and in person.

#### RECENT MUSIC CLUB RELEASES:

**Various Artists** – New Thing (Soul Jazz)

**Kobol** – Broken Ebony (Static Discos)

**Vanettian Snarees** – Rossz Csillag Alatt Szulettet (Planet Mu)

**Deadbeat** – New World Observer (~scape)

To find out more or join up visit  
[www.cyclicdefrost.com/club](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com/club)

## QUARTERLY SUBSCRIPTIONS

(inc delivery and GST)

**LOCAL: 6 CDs only \$165**

Delivered fortnightly Australia-wide;

**LOCAL: 3 CDs only \$83**

Delivered fortnightly Australia-wide;

**INTERNATIONAL: 6 CDs only \$190**

Delivered fortnightly anywhere in the world

The Cyclic Music Club is run by and for music lovers. We aim to offer the best releases at the lowest possible prices. Any profits are channelled back in to Cyclic Defrost.

## Rod Cooper

### *Friction*

(Room40)

Melbourne's Rod Cooper builds and plays his own instruments, drawing upon his background in sculpting and metal work to turn theory into reality. He is also quite fond of performing in underground caverns and storm water drains in the search of new and interesting acoustics to combine with his incredible creations. *Friction*, his debut solo release, is a culmination of over ten years of practice. Unfortunately there are no pictures of the instruments he constructed for this work, though it's probably better to focus solely on the music. Whilst there's plenty of metal clanging, scraping and drones there are also some gentle Zen-like moments of quite contemplation, demonstrating not only a compositional flair (despite the fact that many of the pieces were most likely improvised) but also the intent to use silence, texture and the acoustic space as a compositional tool. An intriguing and challenging work. **Bob Baker Fish**

## Food

### *Last Supper*

(Rune Grammofon/Fuse)

Da Vinci's painting christened 'The Last Supper' acutely depicts a dire moment in the Christian doctrine of salvation. With the passing of seasons, however, it has suffered many a touch up, such that some have come to consider the work 'repainted' rather than 'restored'. Akin in development is a most recent effort from Food, which, while holding true to their past affinity for harmonic and melodic avant-jazz, repaints over this canvas with Stronen's wisehearted and imaginative choice of brush strokes, the breathy, idiosyncratic playing of Henriksen's trumpet and the lyrical outbursts from the soprano sax of Ballamy.

These disparate elements are adeptly interwoven by the soft, almost cottony electronics which branch out from each, smoothing the edges of such sounds to emit plumes of enchanting aural atmospheres. An alteration from *Veggie*, the group's previous, much lauded creation, which appears most noticeable is the stark atmosphere implemented in the album's opening four pieces. Here Henriksen's sax affords these proceedings interlaced harmonies and pieces which, though rife with a mirthful spontaneity, are adorned by alluring shapes, form and substance. As the title implies, this effort may well see the present members part in divided directions. For all that, this final touch-up allows attentive listeners the opportunity to revel in a free play of imagination and understanding. **Max Schaefer**

## Goldmund

### *Corduroy Road*

(Type)

Boston-based Keith Kenniff takes a remarkable left turn from his Helios style on *Corduroy Road*, a gorgeous set of piano pieces issued under his Goldmund guise. *Corduroy Road* is a radically bold gesture, a work of haunting beauty dominated by elegiac and poignant moods. The project is not about virtuosity – no Art Tatum pyrotechnics here – but instead Satie-like simplicity and resonant, elegantly etched wells of emotion. There's a bright, oriental feel to the opener 'Ba,' the music so quiet the sounds of the piano action itself can be heard alongside his playing. Guided by soft arpeggios in the left hand, the pen-sive, elegiac mood in 'Door Of Our Home' recalls Philip Glass's *The Hours*, as does

the later 'My Neighborhood.' As delicate as droplets striking a pond's surface, 'Provenance' is slow, ruminative, and stately, while dulcimer-like cymbal shadings distinguish 'Parhelia' as Kenniff strums the piano's innards to generate percussive effects. Much of the album is rooted in Kenniff's love of American Civil War folk music and it shows. A waltz-like lilt pervades the lovely 'Marching Through Georgia,' which sounds like a centuries-old folk song passed down through the ages and is in fact a Civil War-era classic. A similar waltz feel emerges in 'Methusela Tree' and a timeless folk feel surfaces in the funeral 'The One Acre'. Admittedly, by the time the tenth or eleventh song appears, the album's preoccupation with ponderous, slow tempi may seem wearisome. But that does nothing to dispel the fact that *Corduroy Road* is a lovely and special recording, it's music so beautiful it sounds verges on the anachronistic. **Ron Schepper**

## Erik Griswold

### *Altona Sketches*

(Room40)

*Altona Sketches* is an intimate experimental work utilizing a piano 'prepared' with bolts, screws, paper, rubber strips and cardboard, which are wedged laced and screwed between the strings. The results are a strange off kilter plonking, which sees the piano taking on an almost percussive or rhythmic role at times. Also utilizing music boxes that have been altered and toyed with, the combination of the two elements adds to the haphazard innocent beauty of the pieces. A renowned pianist Griswold improvises freely through strange progressions and uneven textures whilst flirting with repetition, structures, and embracing moods that at times imbue his work with an almost eastern feel, whilst during others possesses a mood and energy slightly reminiscent to the soundtrack to a chase scene. This may be due to Griswold's desire to search for repetitive patterns during his improvisations which lend the pieces greater depth and purpose.

**Bob Baker Fish**

## Johann Johannsson

### *Viroulegu Forestar*

(Touch/Fuse)

Continually casting himself out into the world, be it as founder of a furtive experimental label in Kitchen Motors, partaker in the portentous experimental rock of Apparat Organ Quartet, or composer of theatre as well as film productions, the works of Johann Johannsson are effulgent disclosures of distinct experience. His *Viroulegu Forestar*, which drifts away from the brief, melodic vignettes of *Englaborn*, is indeed 'an experience' in that it is an hour-long, self-sustaining whole, marked out from what went before and what came after. It has its own plot, its own inception, its own pervading quality and rhythmic movement carrying it unto its end. Crafted for eleven brass players, percussion, electronics, organs and piano, a leitmotif branching out from the brass section acts a regrouping base around which the instruments are succinctly wound. With each successive appearance, the leitmotif takes on new voicing, tempo and texture. Originally performed in Reykjavik, the players were positioned in precise locations so as to craft a sense of immersion – and this organisation was recaptured in this recording, which seems a celebration of the ways people engage with an ongoing process of becoming that endows significance to their experience. **Max Schaefer**

## Ustad Shahid Parvez

### *Magnificent Melody*

(Felmay/MGM)

There is little music in the world as deeply mesmerizing, as hallucinatory or as peaceful and contemplative as a sitar master performing an hour-long raga. A majestic instrument, its richness its scope and timbre provides a meditative and at times almost spiritual quality to the music, perhaps heightened by the space and compositional phrasing within which most sitar musicians operate. Indian musician Ustad Shahid Parvez has been playing sitar for most of his life and on *Magnificent Melody* he performs the

fifty-eight minute Raga Darbari, which translates to 'of the royal court', which is considered one of the greatest Hindustani ragas and is said to have been performed in Moghul Emperor Akbar's court. With tabla assistance midway from Anindo Chatterjee, the piece is a deep sweeping ponderous work, instilled with a space and sense of infinite, perhaps regal patience. Throughout the length of the piece Parvez's melodic phrases become more rhythmic and more insistent, with the sounds of the sitar rising and ebbing in concentrated swells to the extent that the point he eventually joins with Chatterjee's percussion is virtually impossible to consciously discern. Whilst the second piece Raga Shahana clocks in at a modest ten minutes, it is a further opportunity for Parvez to demonstrate his virtuosic playing, joined much earlier by Chatterjee, the combination creating a vast lyrical and engaging piece that further emphasizes the grace and beauty of Indian classical music. **Bob Baker Fish**

### Phillip Samartzis & Rasmus Lunding

#### *Touch Parking*

(Synaesthesia)

*Touch Parking*, an incredible looking 12" vinyl-only picture disc with artwork from Danish graphic artist/musician/lunatic Goodiepal, is the second collaboration between Danish electro-acoustic improviser Rasmus Lunding and Australian sound artist Philip Samartzis. Their first, *Fluorescent*, released on Melbourne's Dr Jim records was a challenging work that melded abstracted textures and modulating densities of sound. Similarly, *Touch Parking* is an intricately structured work that traverses multiple sound words, beginning with high pitches, and evolving through rhythmic flecks of static and vague gestures towards numerous seemingly incongruous or benign sound sources. There's abstracted muttering, what may be chorals, bizarre scratchings and percussive elements that may have come from anywhere. Though its sources may seem to be continuously changing throughout both pieces, the duo approaches the work as a constant evolution. Whilst you get the feeling that anything could be around the next corner, the listener is eased rather than ruptured into new movements. The second piece whilst retaining the pitches, drones and fragmentary nature of the first, also contains elements of a traditional drum kit. Again this is only brought in and taken away for a few moments, though it lends a semblance of order to the pitched electrics that remains after the kit is but a distant memory. An intriguing work, the rewards lie in the duo's ability to craft some degree of structure and form from this abstracted though quite vivid sound world and from the vague warm recollections of eighties pop culture the amazing artwork brings. **Bob Baker Fish**

### Stronen/Storlokken

#### *Humcrush*

(Rune Grammofon/Fuse)

A Norwegian jazz academy has sprouted from the hills of Trondheim. Here it's expressed in the union between Supersilent member Stale Storlokken and Food's drummer Thomas Stronen. *Humcrush* is a set of improvised, jittery electronics and truculent jazz. And, despite a predisposition towards improvisation, the proceedings are marked by cohesive structures all the while maintaining a sense of spontaneity. What leaves a most indelible mark is just how *Humcrush* attains variation in tempo, chance occurrences of displacement and empty space, while still crafting pieces who have the appearance of being meticulously crafted. However, not all pieces appear fully fledged; such as 'In The Cave', with its jumbled electronics, sounding like a horde of coins shaken about in a plastic bag. Like Black Dice, *Humcrush* presents an eclectic assortment of mischievous, seemingly chaotic sounds, flowering in a delectably melodic fashion. As an insightful rapprochement between improvisation and composition, *Humcrush*, despite its pitfalls, succeeds admirably. **Max Schaefer**

### Various Artists

#### *Spire: Live in Geneva Cathedral, Saint Pierre*

(Touch/Fuse)

Judging from the 145 minutes spread across this two-disc live document, the Saint Pierre Cathedral in Geneva must have been a remarkable place to be on September 5, 2004. Extending last year's premiere *Spire* outing into a live context, pieces by contemporary composers Marcus Davidson, Andre Jolivet, Lianna Alexandra, and Henryk Gorécki are performed alongside three ambitious works by Touch mainstays BJ Nilsen (aka Hazard), Philip Jeck, and Christian Fennesz. Consequently, the release includes more traditional approaches (performed in the main cathedral hall) and three radical reimaginings. Charles Matthews plays the cathedral's main organ on the opening four pieces. Naturally the live setting imposes itself as a factor. During quieter moments, ambient sounds (shuffling, rustling, coughs) within the space are audible and, though typically such intrusions are unwelcome, here they lend a human dimension to what might otherwise sound excessively austere. Though the recording deliberately presents electronics as the organ's 'successor', electronics also breathe new life into it; astutely, liner notes clarify that 'successor does not mean replacement.' Ultimately, it's the majestic sound of the organ, so steeped in centuries of tradition, that one remembers above all else. **Ron Schepper**

### coming up

19/06  
Pablo Dali (live, Perth)  
Clark Nova

26/06  
Bleepin J Squawkins (live)  
Ding  
Simon HiJinx

03/07  
Triosk (live)

10/07  
Nick Sweepah & Aux One  
Brass & 13th Son

24/07  
Lake Lustre

31/07  
Lotek HiFi (UK)

regulars:  
sub bass snarl  
sir robbo  
prince v

### previous guests:

dj/rupture  
squarepusher  
kid koala  
rjd2

burnt friedman  
andrew pekler  
jan jelinek  
kevin blechdom

manitoba  
neotropic  
cylob

boom bip  
dose one  
baby ford

kosmik kommando  
luke vibert

tim love lee  
dj olive  
sutekh

adam johnson  
u-ziq  
machine drum

hrvatski  
mitchell akiyama  
com.a

plus regular appearances  
from the cream of  
local talent

# FRIGID

Frigid is Australia's longest running weekly independent electronic music night. Starting in 1996 and based in Sydney it exists on the fringes of many sounds – electro, dub, indie hiphop, jungle, minimal tech, post rock and everything in between. Always on Sunday nights, Frigid is the place to hear emerging local talent, live acts and DJs, as well international artists. We also feature regular live video and host AV acts.

**If you are planning to pass through Sydney, then drop in. We'll be waiting.**

**Current venue:** @Newtown,

52 Enmore Rd, Newtown

**Times:** Sundays 1800-2330

**Price:** Free

**Schedule :** [www.snarl.org/frigid](http://www.snarl.org/frigid)

**Bookings :** [info@cyclicdefrost.com](mailto:info@cyclicdefrost.com)

info for members and their guests

Strummed, stunned & shunned:

# MIDS

## A Silver Mt Zion

*Horses In The Sky*

(Constellation/Inertia)

*Horses In The Sky*, the fourth full-length from A Silver Mt. Zion, fosters a furtherance unto feral, immediate territories, where strangled vocals abound through clearly laid out paths of traditional song-structure, guided by bucolic guitars as opposed to swollen strings. Whereas previous efforts spawned a shrouded sadness that sought one's engagement by keeping at a distance, this work squares its shoulders to one at once, fervent in its desire that one lend an ear for at least a moment. From Efrim's drunken drawl, to solemn guitar arpeggios slumbering in a slovenly bed of gritty generator hums, these compositions are impregnated with a strangely opulent and irresistible desperation. This mark is firmly impressed unto the skin of 'Mountains Made Of Steam'. Other attempts, however, such as 'Teddy Roosevelt's Guns', stained by a menacing reverb that meanders about stately piano chords that are hit like a startled horse stamping its hooves and the somewhat stale squealing of 'Oh Canada, oh Canada I have never been your son'. Honest desperation, as becoming as its sight may be to behold, is endowed with the potential to cripple and every now and again ASMZ are unable to control this dragon by its tail. And though there be moments in which violin and viola take on the scraping and sawing qualities of before, a particular nostalgia remains for the flowery string arrangements drawn in *He Has Left Us Alone*. But *Horses In The Sky* has perhaps other aspirations, namely, communication. And this meticulously meditated montage of plaintive pianos, rustic guitars and dissonant string clusters battering harmonic ranges, has all the tenderness of a hand held out. **Max Schaefer**

## F.S.Blumm

*Zweite Meer*

(Morr/Inertia)

Listeners familiar with Frank Sch?ltge Blumm's *Mondkuchen, Ankern*, and *Lichten* may wonder if his latest, the 38-minute *Zweite Meer*, will deviate from his signature style of rustic instrumental folk. After all, the earlier albums' titles suggest themes of movement and searching – *Ankern* (to anchor), *Lichten* (to lighten, to pull the anchor) – with *Zweite Meer* translating as 'second sea, a new place.' As it turns out, the new album sounds much the same as the earlier material, though that's hardly cause for complaint when it sounds so delightful. The material is instrumental folk, with nary an electronic sound to be heard anywhere. While Blumm plays numerous instruments (mallet percussion, guitars, bass, drums), his arrangements often emphasise melodica and harmonium, a move that consequently bolsters the music's timeless quality. While the album makes its strongest impact when broached as a whole, 'Nie,' a lovely and stately march featuring melodica, clarinet, and glockenspiel, stands out as particularly beautiful. Elsewhere, Harald Ziegler's affecting French horn deepens the sombre mood of 'Blick,' and a relaxed vocal by David Grubbs appears in the concluding song to nicely complement the album's overall mood. Only 'Nah' works up some aggressive, guitar-driven steam, with the remaining songs bucolic and reflective in spirit. Put simply, *Zweite Meer* is a gorgeous album of chamber folk tunes filled with yearning, heart-warming melodies. **Ron Schepper**

## Charalambides

*Our Bed Is Green*

(Kranky/Inertia)

Charalambides was born in 1991 when Tom Carter (following a stint with The Mike Gunn combo) and wife Christina were asked to participate in improvisational sessions at a local Houston club. Soon after they recorded the ninety-minute *Our Bed Is Green* on four-track. Remarkably, the collection reveals that key elements of the band's current sound were already in place, even if the twenty-six songs are vignettes compared to the epics on their 2004 release *Joy Shapes*. One key difference is that Tom is the dominant presence, with Christina appearing on some tracks and absent from others. Those that do include Christina typically pair her hushed and dreamy musings with Tom's acoustic strums and raw, bluesy electric, with her voice sometimes drowned altogether by his bruising guitar fuzz. At times the duo deviates from the template: 'Take the Pointing Finger For The Moon' spotlights mantra-like guitar musings with Carter's wordless vocals drifting through the background, while 'Bid You Goodnight' presents vocals by both in classic folk-blues style. Could the collection have been judiciously pruned to a single disc? Some material, like 'The Hair on my Head (Is Brown)' and the brief throw-away 'I Don't Know What to Sing,' wouldn't be missed from an edited set. But stripping parts away diminishes the impact the set makes when heard intact. The material rarely sounds like it was recorded over a decade ago, an impression partially attributable to its sparse instrumentation of voice and guitar. The sound of Christina's quivering vocal paired with Tom's sparse guitar plucks on 'Regret,' for example, could have happened just as easily fifty years ago as today. On both *Our Bed Is Green* and *Joy Shapes*, Charalambides' music sounds out of time, as if inhabiting a universe entirely its own. **Ron Schepper**

## Maximilian Hecker

*Lady Sleep*

(Kitty Yo/Creative Vibes)

Maximilian Hecker's third full-length is filled with fragile jewels so seductively lovely they're sure to melt the iciest soul. In the Berlin-based troubadour's own words, the album's central topic is 'the longing for a disembodied state, symbolised by the longing for symbiosis, love, death, anaesthesia, bliss, and lunacy.' That general theme of surrender is entirely captured by the elegiac feel that reigns throughout, especially on songs like 'Help Me' which recall the melancholy grandeur so magnificently conjured on Sigur Rós's *Ágætis Byrjun*. With its ruminative cascades of classical piano, sombre strings, and the soaring cadence of Hecker's voice, 'Birch' establishes the album's melancholy tone at the outset. The first of the album's highest peaks follows, the dreamily lulling 'Anaesthesia,' its hooks so lovely they're shiver-inducing. And, believe it or not, calling 'Help Me' heavenly is an understatement. Opening with a Sigur Rós organ line, Hecker's whisper intones a slow, gorgeous melody, his voice echoed by a phantom choir. Following that, a piano states the song's minimal theme and a fuller arrangement develops with Hecker's wordless plea duplicating the piano melody. Some listeners may find themselves itching for some deviation from the ballad template by the album's midpoint, a desire Hecker satisfies though not perhaps in the manner expected. Though the penultimate song 'Yeah, Eventually She Goes' begins gently like the others, explosive metal guitar roar unexpectedly appears. Why he chose to annihilate the hypnotic spell cast so strongly until then is mystifying, though repeated exposure softens the roar's anomalous impact. Less jarring contrasts emerge in the sunnier mood of 'Everything Inside Me Is Ill' and the closing title track where glockenspiels enhance the song's lullaby feel. *Lady Sleep* is sometimes so beautiful, your only recourse is to surrender to its plentiful charms. **Ron Schepper**



## Hinterlandt

### *New Belief System*

(Alias Frequencies)

Jochen Gutsch is somewhat of an oddball character. A classically trained trumpeter who spent years playing guitar in underground rock bands, he wields an unusually diverse palette in his current role of composer/producer. His Hinterlandt project came to life while he was living in Sydney in 2002. Although beginning as a chiefly experimental venture, in recent times Hinterlandt has shifted its course in a decidedly pop-based direction. And the latest album *New Belief System* sees super-accessible pop sensibilities share space within elaborate, drawn-out arrangements (indeed, the shortest song on the record clocks in at a stately nine minutes). 15-minute opener, 'Deckchair Anthem' sets the slightly incongruous scene, with cheesy synth progressions and impassive vocals building into darker industrial textures, before veering off into segmental prog-rock. Similarly, 'Mehregewärter' begins with brilliantly chopped beats and bounce-laden techno rhythms only to rupture into some kind of horror-core industrial finale. The title track 'New Belief System' is a just summation of the record. Its rocky bass groove underpins some swirling psychedelia and earthy guitar pop, before layers of added intricacies peak with a click and pop breakdown, and later, a cock-rock guitar solo. In moments, this album comes across as cheesy and dated, while in others, it makes pure, unadulterated sense. Take your bearings from the somewhat disparate points of Euro guitar pop, intricate compositional work, and intriguing industrial flare – and somewhere in between you'll find Hinterlandt. **Dan Rule**

## Out Hud

### *Let Us Never Speak Of It Again*

(Kranky/K7/Inertia)

Out Hud's sophomore outing has been a long time in coming, given the band's *Street Dad* debut appeared in November 2002. The album sounds anything but laboured though, and in fact bursts with

constant energy and imagination. With the material shaped by Vandervoigen at the mixing desk, the band's tight mix of cello, bass, guitar and drums reveals meticulous craft yet never lapses into ponderousness. While its music grows out of its myriad influences, the group is no pastiche; rather it alchemizes a wealth of historical background – soul, New Wave, funk, disco, groups like New Order, Kraftwerk, and Human League – into a sound that's uniquely its own. The early stunner 'It's For You' splendidly showcases the band's strengths. Merging elements of tribal stomping funk, sugary Tom Tom Club pop, New Wave disco, even house, the song never collapses into the confused mess it might sound like on paper but instead impresses as delectably clever and is irresistibly fun, with no compromise to the musical intelligence guiding through it. The group brings the same level of imagination to instrumentals too. 'The Song So Good They Named It Thrice' exudes combustible levels of intensity and passion as it moves through alternating loud and soft episodes. It's a consistently strong album, so much so that a remarkable slice of funky synth-pop like 'How Long' with its '70s-styled handclaps and flanged funk bass, ends up sounding like business as usual, even though it would probably be any other album's peak. While not a revolutionary piece of work, *Let Us Never Speak Of It Again* offers one delightful dance-floor pleasure after another and proves itself a synthesis that transcends its wide-ranging influences.

**Ron Schepper**

## Pedro

### *Early Pedro*

(Melodic/Inertia)

*Early Pedro* collects James Rutledge's first three Pedro EPs and presents them chronologically. The first EP (*Repent*) reveals Rutledge to be a kindred spirit to Greg Davis with material that often evokes the bucolic splendour of *Arbor*. The second EP (*Chapel Was My Dream*) revisits the style but deploys bolder

arrangements of mallet percussion, strings, keyboards, and horns and feature more jazz and electronic elements. The clearest indicator of growth is heard in 'Blessed Is The Savant' where phasing effects and guitars initially mirror 'Assembled By #33' but then advance upon it with glockenspiel tinklings, a choir voice sample, and a laconic beat shuffle. The third EP (*Pedro vs Kathryn Williams*), a collaboration with singer Kathryn Williams, is different though no less appealing. 'Demons In Cases' merges bluegrass picking and marimba with Williams' charming vocal and eventually rises into a blurry shoegaze episode of guitars and drums. Monitoring the evolution of the songwriting, the collection shows Rutledge's music becoming more compositionally developed. Stylistically, the album evolves too, beginning with folktronica but broadening out into a heavier, hip-hop dimension that foregrounds recent *Fear & Resilience*. **Ron Schepper**

## Masha Qrella

### *Unsolved Remained*

(Morr/Inertia)

Contriva guitarist and bassist, Mina keyboardist, and NMFarner co-founder, Masha Qrella brings many years' experience to her second solo album. Despite the inclusion of two instrumentals, the album feels like a solo project, given the dominating presence of her distinctive vocals and occasional guitar. Distinctive doesn't mean richly expressive, though, as her hushed and breath-laden singing, while attractive enough, is rather deadpan in its delivery, somewhat emotionally stunted and restrained. The success of the album, then, depends heavily on the calibre of the songwriting and the arrangements; luckily, both turn out to be fine. Her style gravitates towards folk-pop ('Last Night,' 'My Day'), though there's nothing objectionable about that when the results are as pretty as 'Feels Like', and a lazy fireside ambiance pervades 'Sister, Welcome'. Moving away from folk-pop, the sparse title track exudes a faint hint of

trip-hop while the lurching folk-rock of 'Everything Shows' includes some memorable fuzz guitar. But the greatest contrast arrives via two collaborations: Swede Henrik Johansson contributes a dense backing of unusual mechanical beats to 'I Can't Tell'; and 'Destination Vertical' effectively couples Rechenzentrum's glitchy shuffle and scratchy electronics with Qrella's vocal and power chords, making one long for a full-album collaboration. It's perhaps the most special moment on this generally satisfying and convincing collection. **Ron Schepper**

## Various Artists

### *The Flaming Lips: Late Night Tales*

(Azuli/Stomp)

It's incredible how terribly confronting these compilations can be, as your favourite band gets the opportunity to delve into the work that influenced them. Worst case scenario is when you realize how half-assed and misguided, not to mention crap the music was that fired them up to create their art in the first place. And then you have to re-evaluate whether you still love the band now considering you know their dirty secrets. Personally I've always chosen to believe that ignorance is bliss, that bands fall out of the sky, fully formed with a myriad of ideas that they will never exhaust. *Late Night Tales* is a little classier and eclectic than most, with last years Fourtet mix throwing up some killer train-spotter jazz and folk, so we know we're in good hands. And of course what could you expect from The Flaming Lips but pop and eclecticism, i.e. Aphex Twin's 'Film', a crooning Miles Davis, A Faust lullaby, Radiohead's 'Pyramid Song' and Brian Eno's 'Another Green World'. The surprises are 10CC's 'I'm Not in Love', which when you listen to it with The Flaming Lips ears is no longer a surprise, under-rated dreamy popsters Lush, Roxy Music's Eno era 2HB and Psychedelic Furs, which was apparently purchased as a 14 year old and helped warped their fragile minds. In the liner notes front man Wayne Coyne talks of initiating

Steven into the band by playing a mixtape, where the breadth, order and lack of self consciousness gave him a complete understanding of where the band had been, where they were then and where they could go in the future. *Late Night Tales* has given us the same opportunity. We now know their dirty secrets, and frankly it only makes them more interesting. **Bob Baker Fish**

### Various Artists

#### *Songs For Nao*

(Chapter Music)

*Songs for Nao* is a compilation put together by Melbourne musician Guy Blackman. It's his 14 favourite bands from Japan. As with all compilations, there are a few oddities which one can live without, but most tracks are sweet, gentle and welcome additions to the indie/school band genre. A lot of tracks are worth singling out – each with their own individual peculiarity. 'Cake by Yumbo' is one of the most catchy tracks on the comp – like a Candle Records band with something unnervingly wrong that keeps you listening. You want to sing along, but with the lyrics in Japanese, you'd be la-la-ing along like a three-year-old. Funny that the liner notes claim it was to originally be an r'n'b track. There's more sweet indie-pop with 'Lilac' by Kinutapan with all the innocence and professionalism of a high school band. However sweet, tracks like this may way too simple for some. Eepil Eepil's 'Kilimanjaro' is a great track that sounds like Nick Cave doing a lo-fi piece for a Tarrantino film, while the gentle vocals in Pervenche's 'Good Night' are a welcome change from the cute but out-of-tune vocals featured on the rest of the album – this ballad works perfectly with little more than a harmonica and a guitar with her voice. Admittedly, tracks like 'Telen Pa Wu' by Tenniscoats could get very annoying very quickly. Aren't we all sick of the melodica by now? **Angela Stengel**

### Rumbling and mumbling:

## LOWS

### 13 & God

#### Self-Titled

(Anticon/Stomp)

There has been a veritable avalanche of new Anticon and related releases in the last few months. Some of it has been good (Pedestrian's old school hip-hop referencing Unindian Songs), some has been oddball and great (The Fog's new lo-fi indie album *10th Avenue Freakout*), some has been a little disappointing (Sole's angryman album *Live From Rome*), but this collaboration between Themselves and The Notwist, is outstanding. The Notwist's warm and smooth Euro-pop production lends itself well to Dose One's vocals, at times harmonising with Markus Acher, whilst Jel scuffs up the beats and Dax Pierson and Micha Acher add piano, soaring strings and keyboards. It is the piano lines in particular that bring a sweetness to the first single 'Men Of Station' and the other standout track, 'Perfect Speed', whilst it is the simplicity of the single-plucked string on 'If' that offsets the vocal harmonies and guitar loops. Dose One's lyrics are typically obscure and abstract, more so here than the last Clouddad album that brimmed with quirky observational narrative, and the words act as mental triggers – firing off your own internal thesaurus, making sense of what sometimes makes no sense at all (see the lyric sheet included). Overall a lovely, infectious and surreal pop record, eclipsing both the recent outputs of each separate party: the syrupy electronic pop of The Notwist's *Neon Golden* and the rather disappointing *The No Music* from Themselves. **Sebastian Chan**

### Cassetteboy

#### *Mick's Tape*

(Antidote/Inertia)

*The Parker Tapes* for the Barry's Bootlegs label is one of the highpoints of anarchic plunderphonics. Relentlessly funny, stupid, political and edgy, it has rightfully become a much sought-after piece of semi-legal mixtape art. Now its creators Cassetteboy have been signed to a proper label by DJ Yoda and have brought together another anarchic mix appropriately titled *Mick's Tape*. Since *The Parker Tapes*, though, the world has changed the bootleg craze has come, gone, and turned mass market, and the world has been inundated with an increasing downward spiral of stupidity on TV (*Jackass*) and other media (*Vice Mag*). In this new world *Mick's Tape* is not so amusing. Cutting up various celebrities and the like to make them talk about genitalia and scatology is funny the first time but not after ten tracks of the same joke. Even interspersed with the Happy Mondays sped up 20 per cent and classics from Squarepusher, Fennesz, Fela Kuti, Lord Kitchener and MF Doom, Cassetteboy just isn't as funny as it was, or as it should be. Bitterly disappointing. **Sebastian Chan**

### Chabz/Krizo

#### *Growgrow/Test Lies*

(Realistic Crew)

Budapest, like much of the Balkan Peninsula, could do with a good scrub. The paint peels from bullet ripped pockmarks on grim soviet tenements and medieval fortresses alike. But unlike nearby cities, with the possible exception of Serbia, Budapest's music scene is thriving. And like everywhere with young disaffected youth, Chuck D's CNN, hip-hop, is a big part of the soundtrack. Most obviously with identikit Snoops,

but there's plenty more under the surface. The new Realistic Crew dropped an ace double EP in March this year. Sidestepping the vocal posturing of their countrymen, it features the work of two producers. Chabz and Krizo. Both making music coloured by the gritty realities of modern Hungary. On the *Growgrow* EP, Chabz's melancholy boom bap owes a debt to Krush and Vadim. But his use of folk melodies, say on the apocalyptically bass-heavy 'Karadeniz', puts him in similar territory to French-Moroccan beat maker Imhotep (IAM). Krizo's Test Lies EP adds drum'n'bass to Chabz' recipe. A shadow of hardcore, alongside beguiling rhythms and melodies mean it's often so much more. Sub-bass and broken hip-hop give way to a barely restrained junglist breakbeat on the EP's strongest track, 'Trashlife'. The uncertainty of a chopped-up vocal amidst the chaotic clatter a reflection of life in the former communist city. It's vintage Ninja Tune, minus Coldcut's old-school kitsch. Order from RealisticCrew.com. **Matthew Levinson**

### Combat Wombat

#### *Unsound System*

(Elefant Traks)

Political rap – in these blingin' times you'd think this was a tautology. Combat Wombat recall an age, not so much of Public Enemy, but of white San Francisco vegan feminist rappers Consolidated. Back then, Consolidated spent a lot of time and energy activating US college crowds (who were often sampled in their tracks) and resolutely sticking to left-political raps over funkless, semi-industrial beats, decrying meat eating, the first Gulf War, homophobia, racism, misogyny. Even though they collaborated with Paris (shortly after his Bush Killa media hysteria), Consolidated never reached beyond the already converted, even when they briefly signed to a major label. Combat Wombat are considerably more funky than Consolidated (thankfully!). Their sampling reflects more up to date equipment and a generation of activists reared on media cutups and plunder-

phonics – and like them, they live their politics (read the interview also in this issue). But politics doesn't necessarily make a great album. By midway through the album though you're wishing they would put in a track that featured an emotion other than anger and outrage – because, if they are 'all human beings', then you know they are capable of other emotions. Still, if music in the lineage of anarcho-punk vegan pacifists Crass and the aforementioned Consolidated are your thing then you'll find plenty of shouty raps and samples of right-wing radio shockjocks to support your political views and confirm your ideologies here. **Sebastian Chan**

### The Coalition Crew

*The Coalition Crew*  
(Nice Mics Records)

Hailing from Brisbane, The Coalition are a by-product of the characteristically laidback QLD hip hop community – though I wonder if they're as clean in the kitchen as in the drums. This isn't a backyard orchy bottle lazy around the edges job – it's a well crafted, fluent if not vanilla-tinged debut album of jazzy influenced hip hop. Toxic Al handles most of the beats and bass, rhymers Yui Huzami takes care of mic duties. It's in Yui's delivery that the listener is drawn in – his flow can be impeccable as he calmly pursues syllable patterns like a thesaurus stalking stoner. He's that quiet and unimposing friend cautiously rhyming in your ear at a party – casually withdrawn but entirely sure of himself. Toxic Al provides a musical bed of beats – rich in movement with a defined blanket of live bass. There are broader influences here than purist hip hop aesthetic giving the album a live feel. A promising debut from an easy-going couple of lads from the Sunshine State. **Tim Levinson**

### Daedelus

*Exquisite Corpse*  
(Ninja Tune/Intertia)

This release finds the prolific Daedelus indulging in a game called *Exquisite Corpse*, which the Dadaists and Surrealists are credited with inventing. Take a piece of paper and write a word or a phrase, fold it so no one can see what you have written and then pass it to the next person who does the same. The result is a nonsensical collage of words to which the players apply their own meaning when the piece of paper is unfolded. Recruiting MF Doom, Sci from Scienz Of Life, Laura Darling, Prefuse73, TTC, Cyne, Mike Ladd, Jogger and Hrishikesh Hirway from The One AM Radio, Daedelus plays musical *Exquisite Corpse* with them and the result is essentially this album. It's a whimsical idea that attempts to illustrate the compelling possibilities which audio collage has

to offer. Based in LA, Daedelus is about as far removed from NWA as it gets. Rather he deals in leftfield hip hop that is influenced by experimental electronica's tendency towards abstraction. Amidst the clatter of clicks and bleeps unfolds a musical daydream which has a distinctly American vintage feel. Daedelus slices and dices sound bites from old Hollywood films, lounge, exotica, big band, fifties TV themes and other assorted nostalgia to create unusual juxtapositions of sound that bounce to the beats. Daedelus' somewhat dense mix is demanding but not impossibly difficult. Repeat listening reveals something new each time. Guest MCs are buffeted around by fractured beats and polyrhythms momentarily creating a sense of tension while Laura Darling sings soothing lullabies accompanied by string arrangements that have the slinky sway of fifties lounge music. Daedelus is positioned at the centre of a carefully crafted mix that aims the loose listeners in a labyrinthine barrage of samples. Perhaps not revolutionary, *Exquisite Corpse* exemplifies post-modern audio bricolage at its very best. Fold the paper and pass it on. **Guido Farnell**

### DJ/ Rupture

*Special Gunpowder*  
(Tigerbeat 6)

*Special Gunpowder* is ex-Boston now Barcelonian producer DJ Rupture's debut long player, much anticipated by those that have been following his many mixes and vinyl releases. It spans the musical globe, taking particular notes from the music of the Caribbean, North Africa, and the Middle East. Opener 'Watermelon City' features the poetry of Elizabeth Alexander, which Rupture blankets in a clunky, stuttered beat with a saxophone and one note repeated on a guitar. 'No Heather' has a nasty-as-hell bassline dispersed over a busy kick drum and snare rhythm, to which Wicked Act adds his staccato ragga raps. Some of Rupture's break-core and jungle influences are faded down somewhat, making room for slightly more obvious stylistic dabbling: 'Musquito' with LA Latinos' Fosforo has a kind of poppy feel, and 'Can't Stop It' is close to straight up hip hop and even has a sing along chorus. There are beautiful moments dispersed amongst ugly beats achieving a spectrum of different aesthetics or emotions – 'The Book That Cannot Be Opened At Other End' is three minutes of noise – cold and angry – with vocalist Eugene Robinson randomly dropping yelps and yells; 'Leaves' is a whimsical guitar coda that seems hopeful and naïve; and some of the dancehall/reggae inspired tracks like 'Little More Oil' have a very bright, joyous feel. On *Special Gunpowder* Rupture disregards genre, geography and all the limitations usually set out for an 'electronic' artist, producing most of the music live with minimal use of samples. This gives it a unique sound that

**songpod**  
com.au

get your music  
online. sexy mini-  
sites with streaming  
audio. check out  
the site for demos  
& special deals.

annette@songpod.com.au  
0402 846 932



**cube networks**  
think outside the square

development - hosting - support  
Sydney: 02 9516 4558  
Broome: 08 9193 7998  
info@cube3.net

**cube** **3 networks**

won't date like a lot of sample-based or electronic music can. The LP feels remarkably earnest, without a contrived note or beat, each track complimenting the last, attaining that seldom reached goal of a cohesive and well-crafted album. **Jai Pyne**

### Disco

*You Fight Like A Girl*

(Spasticated)

Now valiantly extricating himself from the bootleg/mashup scene, the housebound Disco has made a power-move into indie disco territory. Having regularly boasted that mashups were easy and stupid fun, such a move into potentially soul-exposing arena could have been fatal. However this mini-album, the culmination of a winter spent indoors is his first and surprisingly good foray, soon to be followed by a more concerted effort. The usual post-punk influences are there – Wire, early New Order – but for the most part they are filtered through the more recent generation of imitators (LCD Soundsystem/DFA and their kin). Although Disco is still working on his vocal delivery – on several tracks the home studio roots crack through the veneer a little too much – and his lyrics, whilst wry and sly, are yet to be as incisive as his new peers like James Murphy. This mini-album is a welcome direction but one that continues the slacker self-depreciation of his earlier work. **Sebastian Chan**

### Enduser

*Run War*

(Ad Noiseam)

The line between breakcore and drum'n'bass is very blurry and this new album from Midwest US-based Lyn Standafer sits right in the middle. Pilfering vocals from a slew of rap and dancehall artists as well as Bounty Killer, Björk, Lamb, and some monks that sound straight out of Enigma, Enduser makes blistering, clearly unauthorised, chopped-up jungle remixes. Generally this sort of bootleg remixing would be amusing but throwaway, like the various jump up versions of r'n'b pop tracks that come out on white label with disturbing regularity, but

it is Enduser's amazing sense of beat programming and track structure that makes the difference here. Amens are the backbone of much of the tracks here, chopped and shredded much in the way the old jungle don Remarc used to do, and where necessary, for effect, there are some floor-destroying 909 gabber kicks. And, unlike some of his breakcore associates – even quick reference points like Soundmurderer, and drill & bass programmers like Squarepusher – Enduser doesn't just ramp up the bpm's needlessly, instead leaving some space for the amen break to retain its funk. Following the stunning *Bollywood Breaks* EP for Ad Noiseam and plenty of other records for other labels, it is good to see a full album getting broad European release. Highly recommended. **Sebastian Chan**

### Grayskul

*Deadlivers*

(Rhymesayers/Shogun)

Oldominion crew Onry Ozzborn and JFK hook up with a bass player to create this 17 track foray into the dark world of super heroes and alter egos. Both MCs flow easily if not a little reminiscent of the motormouth staccato of Non-Phixion. There's guests aplenty (Aesop Rock, Canibus, Mr Lif) and the production is catchy and engaging so Rhymesayers fans aren't the only ones left impressed. Where *Grayskul* fails to inspire is the territory many 'normal' rappers fall short – imagination and eccentricity. Sure, Kool Keith has released a pile of shit over the years, but will the originality and unnerving believability of Dr Octagon ever be forgotten? It's one thing to rap about other-worldly themes but it's another thing altogether for the listener to be captured, caught up and sucked in. **Tim Levinson**

### Karl Marx Stadt

*1997-2004*

(Lux Nigra)

Lux Nigra full-lengths are issued so rarely that the mere appearance of a new one feels like an event, and Karl Marx Stadt's

*1997-2004* doesn't disappoint. It's not entirely brand new material, however, as it combines two vinyl releases, the previously released *1997-2001* and the new *2001-2004*, issued in tandem with the full-length. It features a generous helping of extreme breakcore – the hammering breaks and screaming wails in 'Optime Prior,' the roaring caterwaul of 'Six Red Dead,' and the apocalyptic meltdown 'Ode to the Fate of Mankind' clearly attest to that – but Christian Gierden wisely deviates from a one-dimensional onslaught by including synthetic orchestral flavourings ('011000'), fulminating techno ('Nowhere at Home'), and even mutant surf music rumble in 'Geht das Zusammen Oder Getrennt.' What distinguishes the album is that, while rooted in breakcore, it transcends the genre via Gierden's enriched arrangements and imaginative structures. For example, 'Vgamz' already works well enough as a stampeding broil of slamming breaks and ear-splitting noise, but he wisely enhances it by floating layers of glistening melodies over top. Similarly, a dark and stately march of chiming keys introduces the classically-tinged 'Moonie Moonstone' before clattering rhythm patterns take over. Only the cartoonish Beck-Sheryl Crow hoedown 'All I Wanna Do' disappoints, as its novelty appeal quickly fades, making it pale in comparison to the ambitious pieces preceding it. It's a brief coda, though, and does little to spoil the arresting impression this album otherwise makes. **Ron Schepper**

### Lambent

*These Days*

(Expanding)

To put it simply, some records just work. And *These Days* – the gorgeous new offering from Japanese producer Akira Inagawa (aka Lambent) – is surely one such record. Relocating to Berlin in 2002, Inagawa has become a staple affiliate of the expansive local scene, working on performance sound design and his own, as he puts it, lo-fi hiphop. And it seems all of his strengths have been brought to the fore on this latest release. Largely concep-

tual in its grounding, *These Days* was recorded in the space of 24 hours, without the aid of computer-based equipment. As such, it represents a largely organic depiction of a specific time and place in Inagawa's life. But that's where any sense of concept ends, instead making way for what is, in essence, a wondrously reflective and poignant record. Utilising a base of synths and samplers, Inagawa splices rich analogue cells with crisp programmed beats – his oblique hiphop sensibilities infusing textural dynamics and esoteric melodic inferences. 'Flight To Ishigaki', 'Clockwork Jellyfish', 'Switch Off, Sit Down', 'Southcoast/Seagull' and 'Drive Back' are each gold – beautiful, meditative and distinctly fat. In fact, there isn't a weak track. Strangely pastoral (perhaps even nautical) in flavour, *These Days* is a record of simple yet stunning motif and character; a record that – like the star-drenched sky that adorns its cover – radiates an appreciation for what makes life beautiful. **Dan Rule**

### M.I.A.

*Arular*

(XL/Remote Control)

M.I.A.'s debut album has been sitting on a shelf awaiting sample clearances for the past nine months – the latest being around the crediting of a Brazilian baile funk superstar DJ (DJ Marlboro) on 'Bucky Done Gone'. During this delay most of the tracks got leaked on the M.I.A./Diplo mixtape *Piracy Funds Terrorism* which drew out the album's various source sounds and influences. Nevertheless, it's finally out. This sort of delay has created an enormous amount of media hype and the online blog scene has been talking about this album and its preceding singles for nearly two years. As a result *Arular* was always going to feel like a disappointment to many who caught on early, and for more than a few reviewers there were the difficult issues around M.I.A.'s name-checking of the Tamil Tigers (she's a Sri Lankan migrant but went to a art school if that makes her less authentic?), and the PLO. This, combined with

the free-wheeling absorption/influence of particular global urban styles: baile funk from Brazil, dancehall from Jamaica, crunk from Southern USA, Miami bass, and East London grime, has caused some justifiable angst. That the political side of things is being played up in interviews and in the promotion of the record (the faux lo-fi stencil guerrilla sleeve art carries the aesthetics of the two video clips so far), is more a question of target marketing than anything else. Sure M.I.A. is being sold as a poster-girl of the new sassy global citizen, rootless, making new culture out of a pastiche of the remnants of old colonialism and host nation whilst reading Naomi Klein's *No Logo*, but this is no different to the marketing of, say, System Of A Down, or for that matter the urban London reality of Dizzee Rascal. Authenticity in pop music was always an illusion, and to expect a fully-formed political critique from M.I.A. but not expecting the same from others is a double standard. The two official singles, 'Galang' and 'Sunshowers' still crunch and shimmer with energy, whilst 'Pull Up The People', 'Bucky Done Gone' and 'Fire Fire' each push and pull on the dancefloor. Stepping back from all the faux controversy, hype and backlash just for a minute, for my money it's a killer quirky pop record. If you can accept Missy Elliott into your collection, then M.I.A. is essential. **Sebastian Chan**

### The O.C

Starchild

(Grit/Shogun)

His debut *Word...Life* had heads sounding the trumpets and the esteemed sophomore *Jewels* entrenched OC as a gifted lyricist and reliable performer. Then the D.I.T.C crew member followed behind dragging his feet as hip hop made a beeline for the catwalks and movie cinemas (check: *Bon Appetit*). Shit, rappers found 'emselfs on daytime talk shows discussing ebonics and dollar printing machines, and actually dating (well, kinda...) the models that they used to hire for videos. So why can't the pay-his-dues MC eat some pie too? He can't that's why. Cue 2004/05 and from nowhere comes the bounce back with this effortlessly classic mid-'90s effort (albeit bad title). The story telling is here, the hook-laden soulful samples are there; the vibe swoops down to rescue all the heads that think hip hop should have frozen in time in 1994. A thoughtful and rewarding re-entry firmly rooted in the dearly missed golden age of hip hop. **Tim Levinson**

### Pasobionic

*Empty Beats For Lonely Rappers*

(Elefant Traks/Inertia)

Pasobionic is the DJ/producer behind two of the most interesting Melbourne hip-hop crews: Tzu and Curse Ov

Dialect. When producing for the latter he draws on an eclectic palette of Eastern European and Middle Eastern sonics, whilst for the former his sources lie in the sounds of the Black Atlantic; Kingston, New York, London. In these two groups it is his productions that serve as the springboards for both groups' ability to leap out of the sonic straight-jacket of much other Australian hip-hop. So, with such a background, this solo album of instrumentals sounds quite restrained. Rather than opt for the dusty groove production style of the obvious touchstones – DJ Shadow, RJD2, Madlib – Pasobionic's tracks are rounded, polished, and crystalline, despite drawing on a similar pool of sample sources. With few filler tracks, *Empty Beats For Lonely Rappers* works well as a whole album, a rare feat for a collection of instrumentals – with 'Rockingchair' and the baroque 'Black In Concerto' with its operatic sample being the standouts. **Sebastian Chan**

### Sole

*Live From Rome*

(Anticon/Stomp)

The cover looks like the CNN media centre, where information is received, doctored and disseminated to people in the guise of news. It's live from Rome, live from the excess, from the hypocritical, live from the downright biased and wrong. It's almost overwhelming the breadth of Sole's scope on this, his third album, some two years after *Selling Live Water*. It's clear that to some extent Sole is railing against frustration, chewing up, spitting out and reorganising his disordered thoughts, verbalising nagging feelings, and information garnered from media, word of mouth and literature. In fact it's Sole's dissemination from these multiple sources coloured by his attempts to make sense of this bizarre world he's found himself in. Yet he doesn't appear entirely comfortable with this role, cloaking his rhymes in self-conscious claustrophobic rants that often descend into intricate, at worst nonsensical, and at best personal connotations. Though it's an album with some killer cuts, with some killer lines, 'I don't wanna be the Lord of the Rings but I'm living in the eye of the tiger ('Atheist Jihad'), and perhaps the scariest line 'We are them and they are dumb' ('Predictions'). Interestingly the best cut on this album, 'Theme' is credited to Matt, Sunsoup's roommate, possibly the most incisive hip-hop I've heard in a long time. With production from amongst others old friends Odd Nosdam and Alias, it's chaotic, uneven, though angry, passionate and very relevant. If you thought Anticon had run its course, *Live From Rome* might just bring you back into the fold. **Bob Baker Fish**

ADVERTISEMENT

**WOW!**

**BE STYLISH, RICH, KIND, & BEAUTIFUL WITH an OLLO beer COOLER!**

\*Thank you ollo, I didn't realize how rewarding life could be until I ordered my slushy bottle. (Please, take 50% of my earnings for the rest of my life! MIA A. SHERMAN, CANTONMA)  
\*The hand outline means I can safely grip without beer – even when I'm sweaty! MIA D. TUCK, PEORIA  
\*I have become the envy of the whole world. Do you like looking good? MIA B. SARK, MELBOURNE  
\*I can command! Jesus would use one of the ones who have never! MIA C. COLE, BRIDGEMAN  
\*We've just sold two properties in your area and have a buyer waiting! MIA D. P. SONY, STONEY  
may contain traces of nuts

- ✓ doubles as electroclash wristband!
- ✓ features hand outline for **enhanced grip accuracy!**
- ✓ attractive and hilarious ollo-ologo-as-bottle-cap design!
- ✓ left-handed to enable **simultaneous beer/BBQ action!**
- ✓ e-zee insert™ system for **fuss-free** bottle replacement!
- ✓ fits all brands of **stubby** – plus soft drinks for the ladies!

**ollo**

Available in the following colours: 80s black • goth black • 100%K blackisthenewbrownisthenewblack black • like, really dark charcoal

TO ORDER [WWW.SNARL.ORG/OLLO](http://WWW.SNARL.ORG/OLLO) OR [WWW.DISTRIBUTION.COUCHBLIP.COM](http://WWW.DISTRIBUTION.COUCHBLIP.COM)

**I JUST WET MYSELF!**

**PARADIGM SHIFT**

Tune in to a weekly dose of electronic and experimental music hosted by **Sub Bass Snarl**

**2SER FM 107.3 (Sydney)**  
 or [www.2ser.com](http://www.2ser.com) (streaming audio)

New time – Monday nights – AEST2030-2200  
 Playlists at [www.cyclcdefrost.com/radio](http://www.cyclcdefrost.com/radio)

parties clubs festivals music arts culture

**SPRACI**

[www.spraci.com](http://www.spraci.com)

Events listings for many cities worldwide, news, forums, directory, blogs, services and more...

list your event for free

[www.spraci.com](http://www.spraci.com)  
 or on your mobile at  
[wap.spraci.com](http://wap.spraci.com)

## Unkle Ho

*Roads To Roma*  
(Elefant Traks/Inertia)

It has been a long time since such a quirky record from Australia has passed across my desk. Unkle Ho is a producer based in the inner-Sydney suburb of Enmore, a multicultural area of students, cheap Indian taxi-driver feeding holes, Greek restaurants, Turkish barbers and southeast Asian cuisine. He is also a member of local indie hip-hop supergroup The Herd. *Roads To Roma* is an adventure in audio tourism, taking liberally from near East - Bollywood, rai and the like; Eastern European gypsy musics, and running with heavily dancehall and Timbaland-influenced beats (on 'Thriller Run' you almost expect Ludacris and Missy Elliott to start rhyming). It sounds like there's even a cheeky sample of Edith Piaf snuck in there. It could easily have degenerated into a Womad-style sample-fest but, except for the over-the-top operatics of 'Rock The Damn Kremlin' featuring Apsci, the album retains a subtle edginess... even if there still remains a nagging doubt that there is a 'meaning' in those vocal sample choices other than their timbre. Like Enmore, an essential and quirky place to visit. **Sebastian Chan**

## Verbose

*Resolve*  
(Cactus Island/Couchclip)  
'Vertigo' jumps to life without any introduction, its sinister bass line and B-grade horror refrains fighting for the listener's attention. A very interesting mix of elements that gradually recede leaving creepy synths meandering into silence. Similarly, 'Undercurrent' has an obvious minor key horror fixation, with abrasive synths growling away with tappy beats and muted arpeggios trickling. Syncopated beats and clean and rounded preset-sounding leads and basses dominate and characterize the whole EP, and 'Sabotage' perhaps is the lesser for such clean and unaffected sounds. 'Kairo' concludes with subdued melody and some soft percussion. A solid first edition for

the Cactus Island series, *Resolve* suffers slightly in that it is a collection of tracks that all seem to be extensions of each other, not each having their own identity. However, an enjoyable listen from start to finish. **Barry Handler**

## Various Artists

*Psyche Out* (Mixed by Optimo)  
(Eskimo/Stomp)  
Glaswegians Optimo continue to go from strength to strength. Their weekly club night of the same name is pulling big crowds, they have been remixing their heroes from the punk funk era, and now, not content with releasing *Kill The DJ Volume 2*, easily the best mix of the last 12 months, the duo Wilkes and Twitch return with another wild ride through the last thirty years of music. Living up to its name, this mix moves gracefully and logically from acid rock to acid house stopping along the way to mash Acid Test with Simple Minds' best ever track 'Themes For Great Cities', The Stranglers and Mr Fingers, and paying tribute to the Silver Apples, Fast Eddie, Throbbing Gristle, Sweet Exorcist, Arthur Russell, Chris & Cosey and The Temptations amongst others. The mixing is nearly flawless, and it is clear that their use of Abelton Live in their club alongside CDs and vinyl has enabled them to inventively restructure and dynamically remix virtually anything. This limitless remix might cripple a lesser crew of DJs, but Optimo couple their technical skills with an amazing record collection and a commitment to sticking with the theme of the mix, just like a masterfully compiled mixtape. Not only one for the feet but a very entertaining musical history lesson at the same time.

**Sebastian Chan**

## Luke Vibert

*Lovers Acid*  
(Planet Mu)  
Luke Vibert chalks up his third album in just under a year. This time it is a collection of three 12" EPs, the first of which emerged in the late '90s, and the others in the last few months. Continuing his

acid revival that was first heard on his recent Warp album *YosephH*, Vibert drops some acid breakbeat of the kind that would have had you reaching for the lasers circa 1994/5 when Josh Wink and the whole West Coast breaks sound was happening. Of course with Vibert at the helm it is balanced finely on a tightrope of outright cheesiness and what generally gets described as typical "Cornish madness" (see also Aphex Twin's *Analord* series). There are plenty of throwback

references to the earlier period of late '80s acid house as well, and even some cheeky calls out to hip house. He continues to infect his tracks with his trademark wonkiness, a kind of wobbling shuffle on his break constructions that transform often overused beats with a subtle edge. Whilst on *YosephH* Vibert proclaimed "I Love Acid" over a loping laid-back groove, here he is aiming purely for the dancefloor, and does it extremely well. **Sebastian Chan**

Silence and the absence of it:

# MUTE

## Lawrence English

*Transit*  
(Cajid Media)  
A lo-fi warbling mass of electronically treated field recordings opens Brisbane-based sound artist, Lawrence English's *Transit*. It's a modus operandi that he persists with for the remainder of the subtle contemplative work, merging together multiple contributions from numerous artists including DJ Olive, Philip Samartzis, Mike Cooper, Ben Frost, Cat Hope and Robin Rimbaud (Scanner). English constructs new abstract sound worlds from his contributors who offer field recordings from Thailand, Tasmania, Vietnam and electronics, guitar, voice and turntables in varying combinations. *Transit* is filled with repeated moments of subtle beauty, such as closing frame in which Gail Priest's ethereal vocals are the perfect counterpoint to the harsh field recordings and high pitches. Whilst it is not clear precisely what English is bringing to the table, the majority of the pieces exist in a droning, drafty, drifting world punctuated by passing cars, fidgeting moments of movement and fleeting undefined fragments of sound. **Bob Baker Fish**

## Jane

*Beserker*  
(Paw Tracks)  
It's an Animal Collective side project and, given you never really know what to expect from those peculiar folk-loving experimentalists with each successive release, it makes these excursions further off the beaten path even more curious. Jane is Noah Lennox (Panda Bear) and Scott Mou, a New York DJ who met whilst working together at a record store and hung out occasionally getting together to make music. Reportedly inspired by dancing and dance music, such as Detroit and German techno, Berserker is anything but. In place of the cold mechanics is humour and a crappy DIY feel. It's techno made by stoners more interested in strange raw wisps of sounds than pumping the beat into charging crescendos. The one piece that does have a beat that even remotely resembles the former is 'AGG Report', a quite mesmerising, though sparse, piece with Lennox offering drifting wails and the duo piecing together some repetitive keys and strange white noises alongside the sauntering high hats. The remainder of the disc is much less explicit, epic jams, droning keys, backward masking messes, heavily reverbed murmurs and a crazy soup of sound that these slowed

# ELEFANT TRAKS PRESENTS SOME FINE AUSTRALIANS...



## UNKLE HO Roads to Roma

Debut album from producer of **The Herd**

A kaleidoscopic adventure of broken beats  
laden with gypsy jazz, Eastern folk, dub, indie  
and hip hop roots.

feat. new Quannum signings Apsci

[www.unkleho.com](http://www.unkleho.com)



ACE015 (CD)

## PASOBIONIC Empty Beats for Lonely Rappers

CD ONLY

The debut and fully instrumental  
hiphop album from producer  
and DJ for **Curse Ov Dialect (MUSH)**  
and **TZU**.

"Top quality atmospheric beats – this  
is definitely worth checking out." **ITM**

"I haven't been so excited and  
impressed by a hiphop release since  
DJ Shadow's *Entroducing*." **Beat**

[www.pasobionic.com](http://www.pasobionic.com)



ACE017(CD) ACE018(2LP)

## COMBAT WOMBAT Unsound System

A potent combination of hip hop, dub  
reggae and punk political flows. Feat.  
**Ozi Batla (The Herd)** and **Seed MC**  
(TZU) Unsound System is a bullet to  
the dark heart of the Australian psy-  
che – crammed full with funk, flavour  
and incredible hip hop.

"a perfect combination of enlightening  
hip hop laced with dub and reggae"

**Wax Paper**

[www.combatwombat.org](http://www.combatwombat.org)

**COMING UP IN 2005: NEW ALBUMS FROM HERMITUDE & THE HERD**

**ALL RELEASES LOCALLY DISTRIBUTED BY INERTIA**

SPANISH DISTRO: ZUK MUSIC [www.zukmusic.com](http://www.zukmusic.com)

ONLINE SALES: [chaosmusic.com](http://chaosmusic.com) / [substrata.com.au](http://substrata.com.au)

CONTACT: [info@elefanttraks.com](mailto:info@elefanttraks.com)

[www.elefanttraks.com](http://www.elefanttraks.com)



down yet strangely addictive beats often emerge from. It's an interesting take on dance, moving away from a reliance on high BPMs, plugging into a more ritualistic mindset, lacing it with pots of weirdness and letting it flow from there.

**Bob Baker Fish**

### **BJ Nilsen**

*Fade To White*  
(Touch/Fuse)

To the degree that such a claim can be made, BJ Nilsen's *Fade To White* might be the quintessential Touch album. Consider: Nilsen generated its six pieces using outdoor field recordings archived from sojourns to Poland, Estonia, Serbia Herzegovina, Romania, and Italy, plus indoor recordings from visits to Sweden, Belgium, Netherlands, Austria, and Switzerland. The album tone is set immediately by the ten-minute 'Purple Phase' – its faint opening rumbles are replaced three minutes in by an organ drone that intensifies until it seethes, all the while gradually augmented by all manner of snarling detritus. With its tactile array of abstracted fly buzzings, wave crashings, and assorted scupperped noises, 'Dead Reckoning' reveals Nilsen's affinity for soundscapes, though an even more striking instance is 'Grappa Polar' where erupting stutters and muffled horns coalesce into a haunting alien setting of insect-like nattering and ethereal thrum. Nilsen maintains interest throughout by countering the drone's static dimension with perpetually developing fields of activity; 'Let Me Know When It's Over' a case in point. An even better example is the fifteen-minute epic 'Nine ways till Sunday' which opens with soft buzzing skittering over a gentle drone before delicate cymbal-like simmer joins in, the sound gradually expanding with delicate acoustic filigrees and keyboard glistening. Halfway through, a deep bass tone pierces the field's centre and escalates in intensity alongside organ glimmerings and static noise. The piece continues to slowly mutate until it abruptly drops out at the

twelve-minute mark, replaced by the quiet processed sounds of what might be outdoor rustlings, lamb bleating, and church bells. **Ron Schepper**

### **Mandarin Movie**

Self-titled  
(Aesthetics)

'This record is not for the faint hearted.' So states accompanying documentation to this new project from Chicago native, and current Brazil resident Rob Mazurek. While established as a valuable contributor to albums by Tortoise and Stereolab and key member of the Chicago Underground Trio and Isotope 217, recent work like the bold Mego outing *Sweet And Vicious Like Frankenstein* hinted that Mazurek's next project might pursue an even more challenging direction. Abetted by an all-star crew of kindred spirits (guitarist Alan Licht, bass guitarist Matthew Lux, trombonist Steve Swell, double bassist Jason Ajemian, and drummer Frank Rosaly), Mazurek and company blast through an album of detonative audio assaults and psychotropic meltdowns. If Mandarin Movie has a precedent, the closest thing to it might be Last Exit, a similarly lethal quartet manned by the late guitarist Sonny Sharrock, bassist Bill Laswell, drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson, and saxophonist Peter Brotzmann that terrorised listeners with lethal improvisatory fire in the '80s and '90s. Unsuspecting Mazurek fans expecting a neo-bop Chicago Underground variation are in for a rude awakening as feedback noise-fests like the two-part 'Black Goat,' for example, inhabit a different galaxy altogether. **Ron Schepper**

### **Ariel Pink**

*Worn Copy*  
(Paw Tracks)

From the opening cut we're trapped in a terrifying heartfelt AM Radio land, a lame groove, all uninspiring bottom end and the panic sets in, yet very quickly there's an obnoxious scream tearing through the harmless veneer, spitting

something about 'dog shit' before it descends into a difficult collage of aural mayhem. And that's Ariel Pink for you. He loves the self consciously sensitive and lame. You probably beat him up as a teenager. And as you pummelled him with fists he no doubt wept like a baby. He misses '80s heartfelt ballads, and has an overwhelming need to express his inner emotions. The music is lo-fi totally devoid of high end action, and you get the sense that this is the way he likes it, that his perfect world would be between REO Speedwagon and Mr Mister on the AM dial. The music recorded originally on 8-track cassette is deceptively terrible though often descending into these tripped out jams of inspiring wrongness. Yet Ariel is the star here, very clearly the entertainer, albeit tragic, heartfelt and very, very evil. But you can't help but love him anyway, even though part of you knows that as weird and lame as he seems, it's us who are butt of his joke.

**Bob Baker Fish**

### **The Remote Viewer**

*Let Your Heart Draw A Line*  
(City Centre Offices)

Bathed in ambient hiss, *Let Your Heart Draw A Line* collects ten somnambulant lullabies breathed into life by one-time Hood members Craig Tattersall and Andrew Johnson. If anything, the album takes The Remote Viewer's music to an even dreamier realm than did the group's previous City Centre Offices' outings. The new album's songs are often compositionally simple, yet teem with vast textural depth and detail. The peaceful, sleepy feel nurtured throughout 'Kindtransport,' for instance, isn't radically different in style from the other songs. What is different, though, is the pronounced role of a dubby bass that, like a muffled heartbeat, is more felt than heard when submerged within dense crackle generated from decayed vinyl. Organ, guitars, and glockenspiel tinkles drift from one song to another, the instruments floating in hiss-laden settings of surges, clicks, starbursts, and

static, prodded by gently skipping pulses. Hodgkinson's whispers haunt the ghostly corridors of the almost oriental melodies in 'Sometimes, You Can't Decide,' while the poignant 'They're Closing Down The Shop' augments soft shimmers of fading guitar echoes and electric piano with similarly whispered vocals. At times, her vocals are more clearly enunciated ('Take Your Lights With You' and 'I'm Sad Feeling') yet still retain their fragility. This lovely music, so quiet and intimate, feels like it's connecting directly from Tattersall, Johnson, and Hodgkinson to you. **Ron Schepper**

### **Jodi Rose**

*Singing Bridges*  
(Sonic Art Star)

Do bridges sing? It's a question that has plagued sound artist Jodi Rose for over ten years, and *Singing Bridges* is her documented proof, yes they damn well do. Using contact microphones on the cables to record the inaudible (to the human ear) 'voice' of bridges, Sydney-based Rose has recorded everywhere from the Brooklyn Bridge and Golden Gate, to the Macintyre Bridge in Geelong and bridges in Germany, London, Spain and Vietnam. Surprisingly her raw recordings vary considerably in tone and scope depending on their location. This hidden world she has unlocked is quite fascinating, deep rumblings, scratches, bumps, wind and the occasional traffic noise all conspire to produce a peculiar natural atonal symphony. The second disc of remixes of these sounds features some incredible, though initially almost inaudible work from Francisco Lopez, and jangly, dramatic drone work from Jacques Soddell, amongst some other more traditionally structured electro responses. **Bob Baker Fish**



If fourteen (sheesh) pages ain't enough there's a crazy amount of reviews still to be read at [www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com).



# New from Warp & Lex:



## AUTECHRE 'Untilted' WARPCD180/WARPLP180

Autechre's eighth album is a dense yet elegantly expansive work. It also has a raw, almost live-in-the-room immediacy. In their music is a liquid, alien exotica that's as sensual as it is scientific. And at the root lies a sensual human pulse. In short, Autechre have the funk – exploiting the energy between technology and aesthetics. In the process they are making some of the only truly 21st century music yet minted.

*"another fine album of difficult music from an important band" J Mag*



## PREFUSE 73 'Surrounded By Silence' WARPCD129/WARPLP129

Prefuse 73's new album sees the prolific producer move further into uncharted sonic territories – bringing together artists from across the spectrum to represent the purest distillation of his talents yet. Contributors include Wu Tang Clan's GZA, Ghostface and Masta Killa, Def Jux's Aesop Rock and El-P, Kazu (Blonde Redhead), Beans, Broadcast, DJ Nobody and The Books. An amazingly diverse, beautiful and genuinely original record.

*"exemplifies just how far Guillermo Scott Herron is ahead of the pack" Aust. Music Guide*



## BOOM BIP 'Blue Eyed in the Red Room' LEX034CD/LEX034LP

Heralded by John Peel as "a modern day Captain Beefheart", Boom Bip delivers a new album with all his signature textures, sonic details and hypnotic reveries. This time he moves away from straight sampling and laptop production, and returns to his early days as a musician, playing all live instruments himself. Featuring guest vocalists Super Furry Animals' Gruff Rhys and acclaimed New York siren Nina Nastasia.

*"it might serve as an alternative soundtrack to Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind" Wire*



Also available:  
JAMIE LIDELL  
'Multiply'  
WARPCD131  
/ WARPLP131



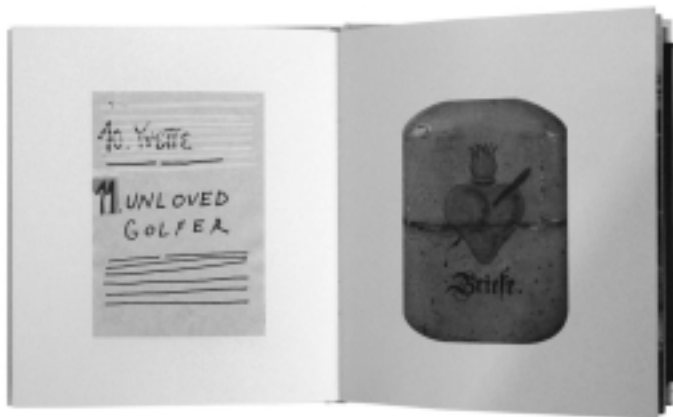
Coming soon:  
Chris Cunningham's  
'Rubber Johnny'  
WF003DVD

Distributed by Inertia

Inertia Distribution // 02 9698 0111 // [www.inertia-music.com](http://www.inertia-music.com) // [info@inertia-music.com](mailto:info@inertia-music.com)

# SLEEVE REVIEWS

with Alex Crowfoot



## By Coastal Cafe

*Old Cartoons*

(Toy Sound of Earsugar 2005)

Format: CD/book

Designer: Loyal

This CD is presented in a picture book, one that raids the past and recontextualises. The cover features a fox in the snow about to jump a fence. The name of the band, in an arc of rounded, orange type, helps to create the impression of a children's book from a bygone era. There are scans of old picture book illustrations, postcards (from scenic to one which could have been lifted from Phaidon's "Boring Postcards" collection of last year) and, yes, old cartoons. A stencil of pink roses in front of a scene of sailing boats treads that line between great and awful so beloved of contemporary graphic and fashion designers. These pictures are all interspersed through the book with the track listing crudely yet charmingly written/illustrated by hand with marker pens and paint. The end leaves of the book are signal orange, and the CD, slipped into a black card envelope, is coated in orange and beige stripes, with no text. Early in the book is a page of the lyrics to Summer Friend, which helps point out that the only let-down is the typography. It mixes Gills Sans bold, Bank Gothic and Frutiger unnecessarily and at times heavy-handedly. But the piece has enough charm and type-free pages to carry it though.

## Mandarin Movie

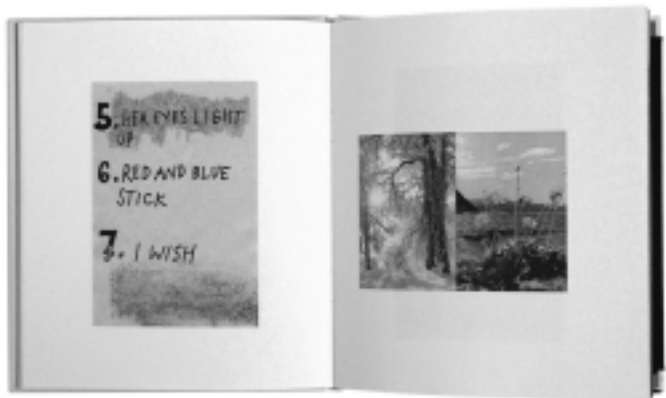
*Mandarin Movie*

(Aesthetics 2005)

Format: CD

Designer: Hans Seeger & Ryan Boblett

Some poor duck had to die to make this sleeve. Like a strange foodie horror movie, it hangs like a lynched Mallard – except it had already been barbecued to death. What adds to the horror somehow is the 80s contraption it hangs from; angled black poles with curled, hole punched matt black metal sheets attached. It even has dry ice in the back-ground. Did Mickey Rourke leave it there? Adrian Lyne would be proud. On the back, pictures of a deranged actress are vertically sliced, obviously showing the deranged mind behind such a despicable act. Inside it's all grey with tasteful white typography. The sleeve a decade forgot. Very well executed, if you pardon the pun.





#### Various

-40: *Canadian Propaganda Films of the 1940's Reworked*

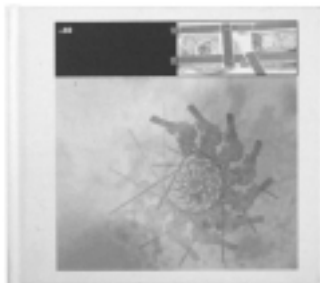
(COCOS0L1DC1T1 2005)

Format: CD/DVD/book

Designer: Chubby Digits / Eric Shinn

A grand looking affair this one, with a thick book-style cover containing a CD, a DVD, and a booklet stapled into the spine. A project with a budget, it's understated in brown, white and grey. In the main cover image is a misty old film camera that rotates into view. A mix of heavy Futura and a script face places it in any of the last three decades, although the remixers involved are clearly carefully chosen and contemporary, featuring some of Canada's best electronic artists, including Akufen, Lowfish, and Venetian Snares. The booklet contains film stills, essays, and descriptions of the artists involved. A slight production problem on the cover manifests itself in some of the

type being fuzzy – pixel images instead of line art. But ultimately the work is more interesting than the sleeve. It's a mix of original films with reworked audio, and vice versa. Musically the old recordings act both as a great contrast to electronic production techniques, and as a connecting thread, creating a coherent body of work from relatively diverse artists. The reworked films often show a sense of humour – not surprising when confronted with the melodramatic nature of the propaganda material they were working with. It's also good to see some pieces show an environmental and political awareness. This project is especially relevant now, harking back as it does to a time when government propaganda wasn't so sophisticated. It wasn't hiding in planted news stories, glossily smiling, perched between surfing dogs and repeated footage of crashes from American cop cams, oh no. It was shouting, backed by LOUD! FANFARES!!! from the cinema screen. A fascinating project intelligently realised.



# CASSETTEBOY

Of VVM/TestRecords fame ...  
the home of cunning musical butchery

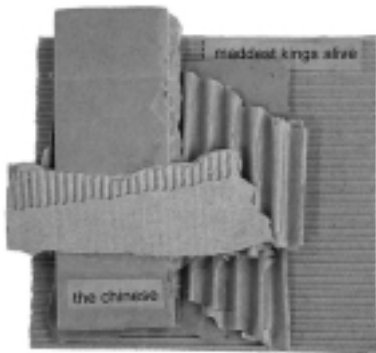
The new mix CD  
from Cassetteboy  
'Mick's Tape'

featuring tracks by  
Jaylib, MF Doom,  
Curtis Mayfield, Jehst  
& Fela Kuti

Distributed by

Inertia Distribution // 02 9698 0111 //  
www.inertia-music.com // info@inertia-music.com

## IN STORIES NOW



### **Maddest Kings Alive**

*The Chinese*

(Science Girl Records 2005)

Format: CD-R

Designer: Uncredited

This offering from Western Australia picks up the lo-fi hand-made aesthetic and runs with it, headlong into the recycling bin. Constructed from pieces of ripped up, corrugated cardboard it's also probably the most three-dimensional sleeve I have come across. It's virtually a sculpture, although I am not sure if it is art or accident. The type is simple lower case Helvetica laser-printed onto recycled paper. The cover opens in a book fold, to simply reveal more type in the same style – the same details again plus track listing and a URL for Science Girl. The CD itself is blank, and is held in place by another band of corrugated cardboard. There's not much more to say except that a little more forethought in the placement of the pieces of card could have created a Constructivist tribute. The music itself is high-quality, listenable glitch that ducks the genre's frequent tendency to overwork tracks.

### **Beauchamp Falls**

*Dicotyledon*

(Beauchamp Falls Demo 2004)

Format: CD

Designer: Uncredited

According to a note on the back this CD is a work in progress. Quite why I don't know, it sounds finished to me, apart from a couple of drum sounds that would settle in better if they were 'real'. Very impressive though and, before I go on, contact them through [www.beauchamp-falls.com](http://www.beauchamp-falls.com) and get yourself a copy before they get commissioned to do a soundtrack and it goes for silly money on eBay. To the sleeve. Here's an example of what you can do with some pieces of card, an inkjet printer, some masking tape and a piece of calico and a simple design aesthetic. The calico, protecting the CD, is sandwiched between two slices of brown card, held together by masking tape. The frayed edge of the calico emerges from the top of the case, echoing the illustration of plant growing from a man's head. A *Dicotyledon* is a plant with two seed leaves, fact fans, although the plant in this man's head is more developed than that. The illustration looks like it was culled from two separate engravings, the man's head being in Greek or Roman bust style. Beneath it sits the artist name in classic script. Under that is the album title in a traditional sans serif. Both type and illustration are in brown. The back – simply and spacioustypeset tack listing, contact details, 'promotional copy' and the aforementioned disclaimer. The CD carries an inkjet label in brown on white.



### **This is... Tunng**

*Mother;s Daughter andOother Songs*

(Static Caravan 2005)

Format: CD

Artwork: Vanessa da Silva

Designer: Chris Watson



A good sleeve for a great album that just begs for the larger canvas of 12" vinyl. And an emboss on the illustration. It's a good one too, by someone who can actually draw. The 'crap illustration is cool' thing can still be fun but this cover features a great cornucopia of simple line-drawn animals, plants, bugs, amphibians, and a human, all on a buff colour that, when combined with the distressed type-writer typeface makes for a simple and organic feel. It's one simple idea carried right through. Portions of the illustration are repeated on inner pages, including a frog that cheekily peeks onto the back of the CD booklet. Elsewhere in the booklet are fragments of lyrics and the credits, again using the 'typewriter'. The CD

comes in chocolate, with the illustration and typography reversed. The one thing missing is an organic texture – an uncoated, coloured stock would have done it more justice. And of course an emboss, but I am sure those are budget issues. But it's reinvention of English folk is very highly recommended all the same.

**Stay tuned as next issue Alex will be getting into some vintage heavy metal.**

**Colour pictures, as well as a review of Hrvatski's new album appear at [www.cyclicdefrost.com](http://www.cyclicdefrost.com).**





Interview with Sir Robbo  
Intro by DH

# SELECTS: SIR ROBBO

TO LITTLE FANFARE OR HYPE, SIR ROBBO HAS BEEN SELECTING TRACKS IN PUBLIC FOR WELL OVER A DECADE. A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE WEEKLY SYDNEY SUNDAY NIGHTER FRIGID, HE'S A DJ'S DJ, AS HE RELYS ON IMPECCABLE TASTE, AN EXTENSIVE RECORD COLLECTION AND A SEEMINGLY INNATE SENSE OF 'FLOW' TO STRUCTURE HIS SETS – MANY OF WHICH TAKE IN DISPARATE ELEMENTS SUCH AS REGGAE, PSYCH ROCK, PROG AND GENERAL ODDITIES. A MEMBER OF DOWNTempo/OUTROCK ENSEMBLE TOOTH, HE CUT HIS TEETH (SO TO SPEAK) AS THE DRUMMER IN THE LEGENDARY SYDNEY SKA BAND THE LATENOTES. HIS PRODUCTIONS, THOUGH RARE, ARE POSSESSED OF THE SAME GRITTY ELEGANCE AS HIS COLLECTION OF DUSTY WAX, AND HE HAS REMIXED SUCH PEOPLE AS FOURPLAY. HIS CURRENT PROJECTS INCLUDE AN UPCOMING TOOTH ALBUM AND A COLLABORATION WITH CHASM, BOTH DUE LATE IN 2005.

## **The Beach Boys**

*20 Golden Greats*  
(Capitol, 1976)

Summer holidays as a kid meant long days at the beach (my family's chosen destination was Port Macquarie, a good 6-and-half-hour drive from Sydney back then), BBQs, pinball arcades, stopping off at Oak at Hexham for the best milkshakes, and The Beach Boys. It'd probably be hipper to mention *Sunflower* or *Surf's Up*, but this greatest hits compilation is the seed of a lifelong love for them. It's got all the big hits of their golden era and it takes me right back to the back seat of our brown Kingswood ...are we there yet?

## **The Specials**

*More Specials*  
(2 Tone 1980)

Ska was the first musical style I ever went head-over-heels for. I was 13 or 14 and a few mates and I threw ourselves headfirst into the junior rude-boy ranks after hearing bands like Madness, The Selecter, Bad Manners, The Beat and of course The Specials – the coolest, hardest-looking band of the whole late '70s/early '80s British ska revival. At the time I really loved the more aggressive ska/punk collision of their first self-titled album but this, their second, is the one album from that era that has stood up to countless repeat listens. It's not really a ska record, but a breathtaking blend of reggae, easy listening muzak, rockabilly, Northern soul, bossa nova, and pop. It's a strange brew, but somehow it works and remains my favourite sing-along record of all time.

## **The Velvet Underground**

*Loaded*  
(Atlantic Records 1970)

## **Love**

*Forever Changes*  
(Elektra 1968)

One of the greatest influences on my musical taste has been my mate Lyndon Pike; he's continually turned me on to great sounds, new and old, for over 15 years. These are two of many stone-cold classics that have been on constant high-rotation in my life since I first heard them at Lyndon's Paddington flat around late '91/early '92, when we had long, unemployed, stoned days with nothing to do but sit around, doodle and indulge in our newfound obsession with all things psychedelic. The beautifully playful melodies and chord structures of both albums are at odds with the dark sense of impending doom and burnout that the lyrics portray, and I find myself merrily singing along with lines like 'Sitting on a hillside, watching all the people die' (from Love's 'The Red Telephone') or 'You're over the hill right now and you're looking for love...' (from The Velvet's 'New Age'). Hmmmm... It's no real surprise to know that both bands fell apart soon after recording these last testaments to greatness.

## **Lee 'Scratch' Perry and friends**

*The Upsetter Collection*  
(Trojan 1981)

My very first reggae purchase. I remember doing a day's work for my mate's dad and getting paid about \$30. On the way home I stopped off at Floppy Disk at Wynyard Station in the Sydney CBD (my favourite record store back then) and blew most of my hard-earned dollars on this album. The first side contains a handful of early Upsetter classics in that funky organ style they did so well, and it was for those tracks that I bought it, but the second side completely blew my mind – a selection of proto-dubwise experiments utilising the full studio armoury of chanting and creepy spoken word floating in and out of the mix, and sound effects I'd never heard or imagined. I totally flipped out and I've never been the same since, thank you Scratch.

## Happy Mondays

*Pills 'n' Thrills and Bellyaches*  
(Factory 1990)

With the Happy Mondays it was just the whole package – the myths, the media saturation, the incredible cover art, the irresistible druggy funk grooves and Shaun Ryder's smutty, dirty and wonderfully poetic lyrics. I was taken hook, line and sinker. Another classic from those wasted mornings at Lyndon's, this is the one that made me want to check out raves and get a taste of that life – the album title says it all really – and on the odd occasion that I give it a listen these days, it almost makes me come over a bit woozy; I feel my jaw starting to wander and my eyes start darting around the lounge room looking for the highest piece of furniture to get on top of and start stomping. I really have to be careful where (and with whom) I play this one.



## IT'S 1985, I'M 14, AND I'M GETTING PUNCHED IN THE HEAD BY SOME 17-YEAR-OLD NAZI SKINHEADS... HERE BEGINS A LIFELONG HATRED OF ALL THINGS FASCIST

### Various Artists

*Carry On Oi!*  
(Secret 1981)

It's 1985, I'm 14, and I'm getting punched in the head by some 17-year-old Nazi skinheads at Town Hall Station while out on a date with my first proper girlfriend: here begins a lifelong hatred of all things fascist. At the time 'Oi!' was the kind of music popularly associated with the further-right elements of skinhead and punk culture. When my mate returned from the UK with a copy of this album not long after the above incident, I remember it being like a secret insight into our enemies world, the songs and street-punk/bogan imagery would send shudders of fear and loathing through me. After repeated listens and much studying of liner notes, I came to realise that this wasn't fascist music at all, but pure third-generation street punk rock. It wasn't cool, it wasn't progressive, it was all about class struggle with some fairly thugish teenage rhetoric thrown into the three-chord mix (admittedly a mix that was swiftly exploited by both political extremes). I can't say I love or even like this album; there's a few decent tracks on it ('Suburban Rebels' by The Business is actually kinda awesome) and a load of stinkers too ('Transvestite' by Peter and the Test Tube Babies immediately springs to minds as one of the worst songs ever), but it will remain in my collection, and is worth a mention, because it represents those times and realisations so clearly to me.

### The KLF

*Chill Out*  
(Wax Trax 1990)

I must have listened to this album just about more than any other; it's one of the few records (actually it's the only CD in this list) I can put on to fall asleep to, as I have countless times. I know exactly where and when every little vocal snippet, synth pad and sample is going to come in, it's so familiar. Allegedly recorded in one live take, this has to stand out as one of, if not the, greatest ambient album of all time. The soundtrack to an imaginary road trip down the gulf coast of the Deep South, 'All the way down the east coast, come back fat as a rat!', the KLF take you on a sonic trip so vivid it's total audio perfection, and a definite must-have.

### The Pharcyde

*Bizarre Ride II The Pharcyde*  
(Delicious Vinyl 1992)

*Labcabinicalifornia*  
(Delicious Vinyl 1995)

I credit early '90s hip-hop with saving me from bad rave. I'd first gotten into it big-time with De La Soul's *3 Feet High and Rising* and NWA's *Straight Outta Compton* but by the time *Bizarre Ride...* dropped in '92 I was ready for that change. I remember having a clear thought around this time that getting stoned with my mates and sitting around nodding our heads to this kinda thing was way cooler than staying awake all weekend and going to lame-ass, dirty warehouses in Alexandria. Looking back, sampling was really hitting its peak as an art form at this time and I was totally hooked on that, and the beats on *Bizarre Ride...* are a pinnacle of sampling genius. It was a long three-year wait for the follow up *Labcabinicalifornia* and some heads were disappointed with it (at least it's better than Souls Of Mischief's woeful second album, such a letdown) but it did it for me. I was still thrashing it in summer 1996 when I was living in Bronte with my friend Richard, both of us unemployed, single dudes whose lives revolved around nothing much but weed, spaghetti, turntables and B-grade videos. *Labcabinicalifornia* brings back those good times...

### Talking Heads

*Talking Heads '77*  
(Sire 1977)

*More Songs About Buildings and Food*  
(Sire 1978)

Just as hip-hop saved me from rave, Talking Heads (and a handful of other 'New Wave' bands) saved me from the teenage curse that is Dungeons And Dragons. I got into both around the same time but music easily won out after a year or two (Yay for music; I mean where could I have gone with D&D? Serial killer?). Anyway, I bought a load of those 2-for-1 cassettes that were popular at the time (two albums by one band on one cassette) while on holiday with my family in New Zealand. I also stocked up on The Cure, Echo and the Bunnymen, and The Jam in the same format. I would've been 12 years old and they were just what the doctor ordered for a moody pre-teen to devour on those long, boring drives between strange, boring destinations, laying on the back seat of our minibus, my spankin' new letterbox-red Sony Walkman in hand, radiating pubescent angst, refusing to give my parents the pleasure of seeing me even sit up and look out the window.

### Labi Siffre

*The Singer and the Song*  
(Pye International 1971)

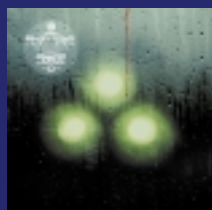
Winter always gets me down; I'm a long, sunny days kinda guy. Every year around early August, I can feel that guy just wanting to bust out, and sometimes it's a real struggle to get through that final cold month. One crisp August Saturday a couple of years ago, I stumbled across this album at Rozelle markets., I hadn't heard much of Labi's music before, but I knew he was the guy that wrote 'It Must Be Love' (the song Madness had a huge hit with) and the cover looked pretty cool, so I went with my hunch and bought it as a gift for my wife Amanda, and I couldn't have made a better choice. It's full of these pretty little love songs; he effortlessly puts into words the feelings I could never verbalise so eloquently. The highlight for me is a song called 'Summer Is Coming', I remember dancing around the lounge room to it over and over with Amanda and our friend Lucia on that winter's afternoon. It's a song so full of the optimism and joy of the impending seasonal change that I was able to drift through to spring just humming its melody in my head, a perfect tonic for those winter blues.

To catch Sir Robbo in DJ mode check  
[www.snarl.org/frigid](http://www.snarl.org/frigid)

Tooth can be found at  
[www.softrecords.com](http://www.softrecords.com)

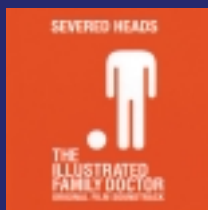


# New Downloads From Inertia Digital on



**Amon Tobin**  
Splinter Cell 3 Soundtrack  
(Ninja Tune)

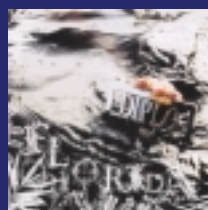
Amon Tobin's new studio album the soundtrack to the popular new video game: 'Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell 3 – Chaos Theory'. Ninja Tune's finest delivers another blinding musical release, full of dark cinematic beats and lush electrifying soundscapes.



**Severed Heads**  
The Illustrated Family Doctor  
(Mana Soundtracks)

Electronic pioneers Severed Heads have created a soundtrack of ambient beauty to accompany the Australian film, 'The Illustrated Family Doctor'.

★★★★ **The Australian** "the sounds are lush and hypnotic, as you'd expect"



**Diplo**  
Florida  
(Big Dada)

Diplo makes the kind of hard-edged, crunked up southern bounce you've only dreamt of. He combines his love for the harsh snap and boom of bass music and matches it with a crate digger's ear for a sample. The results are startling – beautiful and ecstatic.



**Mouse On Mars**  
Radical Connector  
(Rogue)

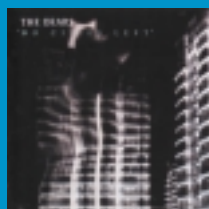
One of the finest names in electronic music release 'Radical Connector'; a floor filler and a headphone masterpiece – a musical manifesto for mind and body.

**Filter** "...an album that actually makes you feel like you're living in 2004"



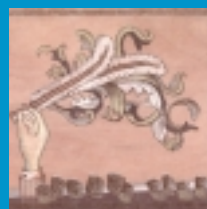
**V/A – Mixed by Skool of Thought**  
Heavyweight Breaks 3  
(Supercharged)

14 of the biggest breakbeat anthems from the past, present and future put through the DJ grinder by rising star Skool Of Thought. Includes tracks & remixes from the heavweights of breaks: Plump DJs, Evil Nine, Freestylers, Krafty Kuts, Friendly.



**The Dears**  
No Cities Left  
(Speak N Spell)

The Dears deliver their greatest and grandest work yet 'No Cities Left'. A record about darkness, with brilliant flashes and rousing jangle-pop. Both NY Times and Rolling Stone named The Dears in their Top 10 bands from New York's CMJ conference last year.

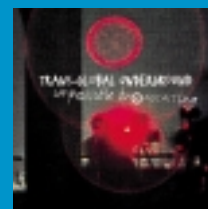


**Arcade Fire**  
Funeral  
(Spunk)

Currently hailed as one of the saviors of rock and roll. Why? Their album 'Funeral' is quite simply a masterpiece

★★★★★ **SMH** "an album of highly strung, tightly wound emotion. Exciting, intense and thrilling. I can't stop playing it."

★★★★★ **The Australian** "a debut that surpasses all the hype...compulsive listening"



**Trans-Global Underground**  
Impossible Broadcasting  
(Inertia Recordings)

With songs that sound like nothing else around, drenched in the sounds of North Africa and the Middle East, unfolding in fat, fresh arrangements. This is what music should be like: beautiful, hypnotic, exciting and totally accessible.



**Comatone E-50 FM09**

"Fluid and imaginative! Perfectly balanced between vigour and melancholy."  
The Wire magazine, UK (March 2005).

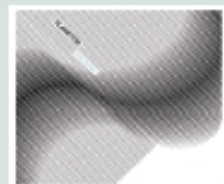


**The Emergency We Got The Horror remix FM10**

Featuring remixes from Electronica, GD Luxee, Spod and Deico.

"Somewhere between John Waters and a Flock of Seagulls. It's not something that you'll ever listen to when you're coming down, but it's a whole lot of fun on the way up."

Drum Media, Sydney (March 2005).



**Plankton Insomnia FM11**

"Insomnia is a stunning mini-album from Plankton ...Plankton have maintained the balance of electronic and instrumental elements perfectly on these eight tracks, crafting a frequently intoxicating and unsettling blend of post-rock, prog, jazz and experimental electronics ... Highly Recommended."

www.inthemix.com.au



**Barrage Hero Or Dirt? FM12**

FBI Radio Sydney album of the week 4-10 April.  
Cyclic Music Club feature album.

"... suave, innocuous melodies bend darkly sinister. Perpetually brooding on some unforgivable sin in his past, Barrage's overtly expressionistic, lyrically confessional dirges seek to defy nature; attempting to recapture sensations of lost love..."

www.synrecords.com



**The Emergenc The Spectrum Deadly FM14**

Lo-fi high-voltage electro rock and roll, and as far from Jet as you can get.



**Underlapper What Came Forth From The Sea FM16**

Six piece Sydney electronica hip hop collective in the Anticon and Lex Records tradition.

**Coming up in 2005:**

Various Artists, Southern Winter  
Northern Summer FM15  
(Feral Media label sampler featuring exclusive tracks at an excellent price.)

Alpen, Overdub  
Sparrow Hill  
The Rich

**Also available:**

Plankton, EP FM01  
Comatone, One Into One Out FM03  
Plankton, The Undertone FM04  
Catnip, Pink & Blue & Green EP FM05  
Miel, Version FM06  
Various artists, The SBS Whatever Sessions  
2 double CD FM07  
David Elliott, Incogniti I Sat On The Corner Of  
A Page Of The Novel Of My Mind FM08

**feral-media**

Distributed in Australia  
BY MGM

Online shop:  
www.feralmedia.com.au

