

sounds from the summit



Abstract computer funk meets traditional instrument samples - regresenting both progressiveness and Japanese tradition. Jockey Slut "a dreamlike score, or maybe even an atternate soundtrack to 'Lost in Translation' - gargeous stuff'



Boards Of Canada, Mogwai, Four Tet and Lali Puna remix songs found on Boom Bip's previous album 'Seed To Sun'. Corymb also features five original Boom Bip songs



Dead Combo Dead Combo

Debut album from output recordings' latest signings, Finnish marauders Dead Combo. Their raw and aggressive live activas premiered by output at the Output/OFA records party in NY.



Florida

A fried-out booty-shaking hip hop labed pigs psych rock epic combining a lave for bass music with a crate-digger's ear for a sample and a classical composer's feet for development.



Hexstatic Master View

[Ninja Tune] Incredible new multimedia package; the CD albumis a loose mash-up of classic electro. Ninja funk and sneaky samples. The DVD features crazy cool AV shit land comes with free 30 glasses ().



Coming On Strong

(Moshi Moshi) A refreshingly unique, edectic debut that seamlessly blends funk. electro and hiphop, making a sound which is not unlike Prince taking a cold shower and doing temazepam with 'mellow gold'-era



Juxtapostion

A callection of sounds and instruments (Thrill Jackey) which are "micro re-recorded" then rearranged alongside live instruments. The result is an audio feast - headphones and high volume encouraged! Produced by John McEntire of



Mara Cartyle The Lovely

Produced by Plaid and released on Herbert's Accidental label. This album includes a cameo appearance from Nicolette and is so lovely that it will make you smile and cry at the same time.



Secret Masters The Lost Dub Tapes

A collaboration from dedicated dub/ reggae heads: Pieter Bourke & Brian West brook. What began as experimentation with dubturned into an obsession. The result draws influences from the classic 70s Jamaican sounds while still being very contemporary.



A New White

Includes Anticon's Dose One & Jel from Themselves and cLOUDDEAD. This out standing debut was created with one real and one electronic drummer plus electric cella, keyboards, guitar and of course, Dose One's extraordinary vocals.



Moment Returns

Sydney jazz trio fusing electronic production values with new music and jazz techniques 'Moment Returns' will appeal to those who are already big fans of Four Tet. The Necks or Cinematic Orchestra.



Position Correction

Debut album from Melbourne's hip hop heroes TZUI Highlights everything good about local hip hop, combining attitude, humour, grit and wit plus a liberal dose of shake your-ass - and they got it all on one disc.



Distant Sense of Random Menace

Local talent Urthboy (best known for his MCing at the front of The Herd) has collaborated with Hermitude, TZU and The Herd to make his solo debut. Filled with politicised personal stories, this is an adventurous release from a leading light of Oz hiphop.



Ammunition

A \$9.96 sampler od for Planet Mu Records - A mindblowing 80 minute mix by Mike Paradinas (U-Ziq) which showcases the wild variety this label has to offer.



Sixteen Halku & Other Stories Sigmatropic

A sensual, dinematic art rock soundscape Roque Records featuring a star-studded line-up of vocalists singing the halku of Greek poet George Seferis, Includes Robert Wyatt. Cat Power, Lactitia Sadjer, Lee Ranaldo, Alejandro Escovedo, Mark Ejizel and more.





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CDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 9. It is a bit later and lighter than we promised as Cyclic Towers has yet again been hit by a maelstrom of ill fortune which has permeated out to some of contributors as well. Bear witness to our iPod crunker being bailed up in London after a big night out, an interviewee going AWOL, and my co-ed Dale limping around in an oversized space jandal. The promised articles that are missing will appear in a bumper Issue 10.

Despite this, we've been inundated with good music in the past few months and as a result of this flood we have now set up a 'music club' the Cyclic Music Club. The idea of the club came out of talking to one of our writers, Chloe Sasson, about her book club, and from all the emails we get asking where to get some of the music we talk about in the magazine. Like a book club the music club is simply a club where everyone listens to the same album and then discusses it - however using the resources we have, we've taken it the next step - we source the albums for you and send them direct to your door! This kills several birds with one stone and makes quite a tasty bird pie out of them. All our Music Club members get new, interesting music sent to them as often as every fortnight complete with listening notes to help them make those all important linkages between what they might be listening to and what they already own or know. Members also get to participate in discussions of the albums with the artists and labels responsible for them, as well as talk to other club members - thus creating a nice relationship between consumer and producer, voyeur and artist. Since launching the club on our email list, we've sent out electronica, sound art, hiphop, indie and reggae albums drawn from both local and overseas labels. The Music Club is about exposing people to new, interesting music in an accessible painless way, and building up a stronger, more diverse music listenership out there. To find out more check out www.cvclicdefrost.com/club.

So, on to the stories that are in this issue. We have local interviews with Sydney post-rockers Decoder Ring fresh from their scoring of Cate Shortland's excellent award-winning debut feature film Somersualt, Brisbane dub techno producer Twotone, Sydney sound artist and Electrofringe director Gail Priest, and an overview of the Australian VJ scene since the early 80s from Jean Poole. On the international front we have an interview with breakbeat and jazzstep producer Domu as well as rather cynical reviews of the annual Sonar and DEMF festivals. Filling it out are a stack of reviews and a killer cover this time done by Sydney hip hop producer and graphic designer Macross Matrix. Sebastian Chan & Dale Harrison, Editors.



Extended articles

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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.









Above from top:
Paul Drummond's layered style
in effect; scenes from the
Realistix video

Paul Drummond is something of one-man creative agency to the Australian hiphop underground. In addition to his day job as corporate graphic designer and as MC Macross Matrix, Drummond designs clothes, flyers, LP artwork, websites, is designing a book and directs music videos for a network of Aussie hiphop mates. Simply put, hiphop is the avenue into which this issue's cover designer channels all his creativity.

'It all started when I met Dr D (now 13th Son) in Year 7 at high school,' begins Drummond. 'He was in a group called Industrial Dispute that later became Fathom. I was introduced to hiphop by these guys. I was never really into music before I was exposed to the raw, underground, rugged beats and lyrics that 13th Son and the Fathom boys played me. For better or worse, music and especially hiphop music, has moulded me into the person I am: how I see the world, how I am seen in the world and how I participate in it. To start to make music and be involved in the local hiphop scene was just a natural progression.'

Good at art and tech drawing at school, Drummond 'lucked it' into UWS Nepean's Visual Communications course, and his hiphop focus never wavered. 'It really pissed off my lecturers after a while. From photography to interactive media to video, all had something to do with hiphop in some form.' But hiphop is simply the filter through which everything passes, as Drummond is inspired by many others things: 'Anime movies, Hollywood and B-grade movies. B-grade movies are always a good resource to pick up little tricks on how to get effects on the cheap,' he explains. 'Anything I find on the street, on TV, the net, anything that's cool enough to make me stop and really think about how it was done, is inspiring.'

Recently Drummond has been testing his adaptability by producing some music videos. 'Doing a clip is another challenge (especially with no money) compared to other forms of design. But if you're a creative person you should be able to apply your ideas and skills to anything.'

Retaining the rough and ready underground approach, Drummond's most recent clip, for Sydney MC Realsitix, took just 50 minutes to film. '[And] that includes walking to the location,' he says. 'Realistix used to be a part of the Blue Mountains group Explanetary, rapping alongside Urthboy. He was working on his album *Turf Wars* (which is out now) and I was looking for a video project to play around with. We picked a song and a location and filmed it in an afternoon. It was a very unplanned, suck-it-and-see type of shoot. We had a portable stereo to guide us and a mini DV camera. We did about two takes of the whole song in about 4 different places and I filmed bits and pieces as we walked around to fill in the gaps. Then I took it home and spent a lot of time editing and treating what was shot in Final Cut Pro, After Effects and Combustion. There was no deadline so I fucked around a bit.

'I was after a video project but it needed to have a useful end result. If it didn't have one I would never have finished it. I know I could have just wandered the streets to shoot anything that







clockwise from left: Celsius cover and album detail; poster designed for Pearson's; Oneleginc t-shirt design



moved and played around with that, but then it had no purpose, I wouldn't have gotten on board with it and I would have ended up with crap.

'It was very time consuming; I'm a tough customer to please, so I was always redoing pieces. Funnily enough I'm still not happy with the final result, but happy enough to let it go. You have to learn when to say when.'

When in MC mode as Macross Matrix, Drummond teams up with legendary Sydney producer Sereck (Def Wish Cast, Celcius), who also introduced him to Australian graf artist Atome. Drummond designs clothes for Atome's Oneleginc brand, as well as laying up Atome's new book *Unleaded*.

'The Atome Unleaded book was a project Atome had wanted to do for a while. The book is a collection of excerpts from Atome; an exclusive peek into his inner-workings and style. The never-before-seen lead pencil sketches are from the birthplace of his style, his black book. Unleaded is about documenting and sharing Atome's art with the world.

'We originally got together when Atome was looking for someone to design T-shirts for Oneleginc, and Sereck told him about me. We've been doing things together for about 18 months. I had a hand in the winter range of Oneleg hoodies and zip-ups, as well the new Oneleginc website. And keep an eye out for this summer range of tees; it's gonna be dope! The hook up has been great for me cause I haven't just gained a good friend, but we've come up with some great projects for me to really get my design out to the world on a personal level, not for a company. It's very satisfying seeing someone you don't know on the street rocking a tee or a hoodie you did.'

Looking into the future, Drummond sees more well-planned works. 'My approach to the projects I take on is something I have been refining of late: Making the final work's purpose clear in my mind,' he explains. 'Once I am happy with what I want to communicate, or not communicate, I try to find one strong element that is exactly what I want and use that as the core. Then I let everything else fall into place from there. Also, the first creation doesn't have to be the last, sometimes I save it and come back the next day and remix.' In whatever he does, Drummond is on a constant quest for what he describes as the 'Oh shit' factor. Why? Drummond simply states, 'Dunno, it's just my thing,'



Paul can be found at **www.bunkadefresh.com**. New Macross Matrix material is scheduled for a 2005 release.



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52 ENMORE RD
FREE

COMING UP

Sunday November 28

Plumbline (Live, UK) Snawklor (live) Inchtime (live) ollo Seb Snarl

Sunday December 5

Burnt Friedman (Germany) w/Hayden Chisholm Pivot (live) Sub Bass Snarl

Sunday December 12

Lyndon Pike (FBI) Kid Calmdown Sir Robbo Prince V

Sunday December 19

Clark Nova SleepyRobot Sir Robbo Prince V





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Ryan Gobbe is in an odd position: with two albums out in the same month on different independent labels, he is unsure which he should be talking about more. Under the alias of Twotone he has released Cinecity on Bug Records, and as Mieli he has Version on Feral Media. Despite different pseudonyms, both releases draw on a similar palette of sound - shifting tones, delaydrenched pads, itchy high-hats, and throbbing pulses with nods to a lot of overseas producers such as Akufen, Sutekh, and Farben. Like these producers, Gobbe is working with a precise computerised sound, the result of detailed programming, in which the challenge is to make things sound humanised and organic, despite being intensely digital and mathematical.

The Brisbane scene, apart from a few isolated gigs, generally neglects electronic musicians of any sort.

BLACK AND WHITE TwoTone/Mieli Interview with Ryan Gobbe by Sebastian Chan

'There is so much you can do now, just within a computer-based studio, that you could never do so easily before', Gobbe explains. 'And now that high-end computers are so affordable, it's more accessible than ever before. I don't need a lot of hardware/outboard equipment, and I stick to software mostly - programs [like the open source] Jeskola Buzz, which is completely free and practically limitless. The online community that's attached to this software is incredible and there are thousands of users constantly improving and adding to it. It's the same with [Native Instruments'] Reaktor. The problem now is finding what you don't want to use! There are more options than ever and more ways of doing the same thing, so you have to set your own limits and kind of restrict your interests just to get things done - it's easy to get caught within the millions of details.' The very nature of this kind of patch-based software is that its resultant music is full of minute detail - microsounds.

Based in Brisbane, Gobbe is somewhat separated from the wealth of like-minded producers that are based in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth - the three Australian cities where semi-regular nights form the backbone of the scene. In Sydney there is an opportunity to hear microhouse and its related genres in small doses at Mad Racket and Frigid, in Melbourne there is Deepchord run by the crew from Slap Records, and in Perth there is Dave Miller's Aesoteric which has formed a cluster of interesting producers around it. Gobbe says, 'The Brisbane scene, apart from a few isolated gigs, generally

neglects electronic musicians of any sort. It does however, have a surprisingly large DJ scene, and a respectable turnover of DJ acts passing through. I think this DJ culture excludes local acts and people starting out from getting a foothold. Venues are rock-oriented and, apart from [the monthly experimental night] Fabrique, I can think of no important events that open up the scene or make an effort to book interesting overseas acts. My only complaint with Fabrique is that it is on too rarely; as any events of this nature are obviously valued by the dedicated crowd it draws. Also, local independent radio station 4ZZZ puts out a compilation CD of local electronic music once a year, focusing on unsigned acts, which is a nice move towards forming a scene. On the whole though, the club scene offers little to me as I find little difference between nights, so I don't get too involved. Instead, home listening has taught me a lot about what I want to do. Over the last few years I've found a lot of great records that I always refer to, artists such as Sutekh, Twerk and Akufen. But one of the biggest problems electronic music faces is how fast it can date. These artists have avoided this to some extent, and I appreciate anyone who can do this.'





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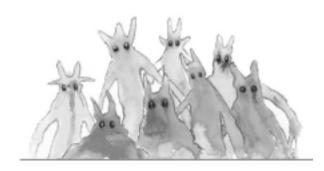


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* SOME ASSAULT

Interview with Matt Fitzgerald Decoder Ring by Peter Hollo

One of the interesting things about Decoder Ring, back when their first EP came out, was that it was an instrumental rock hand and really keyhoard driven Since then Kenny Devic Ir (the keyhoard and continumental rock hand and really keyhoard driven Since then Kenny Devic Ir (the keyhoard and continuental rock hand) and really keyhoard driven Since then Kenny Devic Ir (the keyhoard and continuental rock hand) and really keyhoard driven Since then Kenny Devic Ir (the keyhoard and continuental rock hand) and really keyhoard driven Since the Ring (the keyhoard and continuental rock hand) and really keyhoard and continuental rock hand. One of the interesting things about Decoder Ring, back when their first EP came out, was that it was an instrumental rock band, and really keyboard-driven. Since then Kenny Davis Jr (the keyboard in to he instrumental rock band, and really keyboard-driven. Since then Kenny Paon Fly from Recurritator etamod in to he have the back of the band of her Cooff Towner the back player. instrumental rock band, and really keyboard-driven, Since then Kenny Davis Jr (the keyboard and synth into help layer) has left the band, as has Geoff Towner, the bass player. Buring this time the remaining members as has Geoff Towner, the bass player. During this time the remaining members are a former to his regular line of work. player) has left the band, as has Geoff Towner, the bass player. Ben Ety from Regurgitator stepped in to help when Geoff left, but has since returned to his regular line of work. During this time the remaining members bere quietly managed to find their feet and have delivered a soundtrack to one of the most interesting. when Geoff left, but has since returned to his regular line of work. During this time the remaining mem have quietly managed to find their feet and have delivered a soundtrack to one of the most interesting Anothelian films in years (not to monitor a region; in Time)

Australian films in years (not to mention a review in Time).

as far as we're concerned it's just all electromagnetic waves, just different parts of the spectrum.

the band, ultimately,' says Matt Fitzgerald, who plays guitar, keyboards and synth. 'We're anti the notion of any idolatry of musicians, which is quite funny in these times of fashion-led hype machines. It was also a statement against gentrification and pigeonholing. And at its highest level, it was even an assault on demarcations between audio and visual,' he explains. 'Simon, who does the projections, likes to say that as far as we're concerned it's just all electromagnetic waves, just different parts of the spectrum. For us it's always been about trying to create something that's allencompassing in terms of music, but also in terms of destroying the demarcation between audience and musician. All of us are both passive and at the same time active in creating a context or an environment, and an emotional sensation within that.

'That all sounds quite cold and theoretical, but we wanted to create something that, when you enter a room, would be all-encompassing, a huge and emotional wave that you got caught up in, that was almost disorienting. A full sensory

event rather than being seen as music or projection or a band or DJ, or all those sort of bullshit things that don't really matter - what you're actually interested in is an experience, and for us it was about trying to strip everything back so that the experience was paramount.

'When we play live, we see it more like a DJ set; it's always frustrated us how live performance is conducted, it's so stop-start. We try and move it around so that hopefully you don't get those in-between-set lulls that are so frustrating; when one band finishes and you stand around, rush to the bar, and wait for the next band to start again.'

Although one thinks of Decoder Ring as an instrumental band, all their releases have featured vocal tracks, usually utilising the vocals as just another instrument. Lenka, who sang on the first album, appears again on the Decoder Ring soundtrack for new Australian movie Somersault.

The album has been getting healthy airplay and really does manage to meld Decoder Ring's rock-meets-electronic aesthetic with something really quite pop.

'We found it a quite exciting and challenging thing to do, especially the closing song - you know, the classic film closer; it's a bit more overt than what we tend to do. It's an area which we never expected that we'd get the opportunity to do, but vou've got such a hilarious - sometimes fantastic, sometimes appalling, but always very effective - lineage of closing song in a movie. You know, you've got your Beaches, Officer And A Gentleman. We were like, 'This is a really weird place in music to be,' so we wanted to do

something which was us, but at the same time pay a bit of homage to the tear-jerker closing song.

'And the soundtrack to the film is rarely placed under any dialogue, so it stands alone. There's sort of three types of film score you can have: background music, which is under dialogue; really overthe-top, tugging your emotions music – like a danger theme, *Psycho* being the classic example; and then the third is where the music is a different perspective, a layer of the film that's integral to it – neither overt or underneath but a component in itself.

'Our brief was that it's a movie where the heroine of the film has all sorts of encounters; she's just left home and she's trying to step out by herself into the dangerous world of male testosterone as a beautiful young girl, and finding the difference between sex and love. We were about her inner naïveté, because on the outside she was pretty street-smart, but she had a really beautiful, innocent view of the whole world. So it's counter-intuitive we didn't don't represent what's on screen, but what's in her – what she's feeling, and how she's seeing it. We really had to lock in with the character.'

While touring after the first album came out, the band had been working on a lot of new material - in fact they had about three quarters of an album ready to go. 'Whether that material will ever see the light of day is another thing,' says Fitzgerald. 'It's funny because you look back and it's been almost two years but it's gone incredibly quickly - we toured and then just jumped into the film for about six months. And because there are songs on the album that aren't in the film, we finished them off and produced the album, and then we buggered off to Cannes. Since then we've just been getting back to playing live and starting practising for some shows in October. They're going to be special shows where we focus a lot on the soundtrack, but we also want to have some of the various complementary material from both the EP and the album, and some new material as well. We're really excited about it actually.

'We're really good at writing songs before we record them and then forgetting them. We did a phenomenal song just last week, which we all sort of finished, and were absolutely blown away. But we all have absolutely no idea what we were playing or what it actually sounded like, except that it was incredibly sonic and moved really naturally. We became so lost in it that nobody noted what was happening. It probably would've been white noise once it filtered through the minidisc. One of the rebounds from doing all this delicate stuff is that we've been quite loud at the moment.

'On this album, a lot of what we ended up using was done by playing around, jamming and recording various instruments over it, first takes and things like that that really fitted. So the soundtrack is amazing like that — a lot of it hasn't been analysed to death. There are first takes with buzzes

and cicadas and crickets in the background, and other things like that which just all had the mood that we wanted, which is that gentle innocence.

'We worked very closely on the soundtrack with Sam Petty, who's the sound designer on the movie, and who worked with The Necks on *The Boys* soundtrack. He did amazing atmospheres, so we worked very closely with the music and him. We actually have some of his sound design on the album. You really get a sense of the journey; it goes in an arc similar to the film, but independent of it at the same time. A lot of the tracks have been extended and changed, parts added and new songs added. So it's a soundtrack, but it's a Decoder Ring album too. It traverses the terrain in the same way that all our releases have, but in a different way.

'The soundtrack is like its own world; it's always the aim to create a world that you're invited into. I find it's like you can put play the album and create a little bubble – you're in it and the rest of the world's outside it – and that's a really nice thing to have done, especially with what's happening to the world at the moment. In the whole world context it's really nice to do an album that is gentle and delicate, for us it's almost a statement. For me, all this energised macho bullshit stuff that's going on at the moment sort of denies the existence of these other issues, but in the past music has played a much more active part. At the moment music seems to just be hyping everybody up and being stuck on television commercials with no shame.

'This album is more electronic than before, but it's also more organic. It's not over-the-top synthy sounding; more organic synths, and some sequencing and cutting up of found sounds - but there's also accordion, vibes, cello, glockenspiels. Two genres I really like but really hate the name of are post-rock (which often they turn around and use as an insult) and IDM. If I'd like to see us as anything, it'd be the same territory as Eno - vou can see it as ambient. but then there's his working with Talking Heads, like Remain in Light, which is also really funky and live. Whatever they were called back then, it was ultimately a form of punk, a no-wave response, as they called it. The genres have all been torn down now really, so nu-rock no longer really has the spirit of rock, and so on: there's 'chuckle-punk' now - all the punk bands stopped being punk, and the rock bands stopped being rock bands; it's all so fucked-up it doesn't matter what you call yourself.

'We've always liked to play with all sorts of different styles of bands, everything from the more punk/hardcore bands, to hiphop, electronic, or postrock, and it's always been very important to us that we like all sorts of different music. We like to support stuff that we find interesting rather than anything genre-specific, but at the moment I don't really feel an affinity with anything scene in particular. And because we've just been doing what we do, independent to music, it's funny how music ghettoises styles. It's really nice to just say, 'This is what I do and you can take it or leave it,' and it's up to other people to make those decisions. They're going to anyway – and they've probably got a better perspective than me.'



Decoder Ring's soundtrack to Somersault is released on Inertic





* IMAGERS OF AUSTRALIA Retrospective of Australian Video Art

by Sean Healy

Trace the current live pixel boom back from ravelight to cavelight, and music will always be found dancing with imagery. Even musical notation is a visualisation, and a rich lineage of shadow puppetry, sideshow carnivals, tweaked oil lamps, slides and album cover art attest to the historically interwoven nature of music & imagery. Live visual tweakage got a kick out of the last decade though: with real-time video and graphics manipulation possibilities soaring thanks to a shift from C64 to P4 & G5; the emergence of laptops capable of broadcast quality video edits; delivery of a dizzying array of timemelting and splicing audio and video software; and web connectivity. This issue of Cyclic Defrost we will profile some of the Aussie Pixel Battlers who rode that wave in.

AV pioneers such as Severed Heads; the hardware-modifying 'Video Subvertigo'; and the Australian Fairlight company (which made the CVI video processor) should all be recognised for having risen to the challenge of invention each contributing much to the growth and potential of the live video community in Australia. Alongside them, several kev artists contributed to the evolution of live video in Australia, and it's a pleasure to present some interview responses from the majority of Australia's finest live visual aesthetes, experimenters and epilepsy-inducers of the pixel decade past.

FAIRLIGHT

In 1984 Australian innovators Fairlight released the 'The Fairlight Computer Video Instrument'

(CVI), a no-longer manufactured but highly sought after piece of vintage video pie. What you got for your US \$6,500 in the day, was a small rectangular box with a set of sliders, buttons and a small graphics pad with which you could 'paint' or stencil layers of video. As a real-time video effects box with 100 customisable preset effects and hands-on analogue control the CVI caught on quick in the electronic arts world, and went through several updates until its eventual demise. Now only occasionally popping up on ebay for too much moola.

TOM ELLARD

The enigmatic lynchpin and frontperson for Severed Heads, with an embarrasingly large back catalogue of mashed & mutant audiovisual material. Ellard was testing the limits of computerbased AV technology before many current DJ/VJs were born and is heavily cited as an influence by many. He continues to release new experiments at his <www.sevcom.com> site.

Early Inspirations?

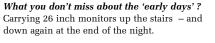
Film effects - of the sort created by Douglas Trumbull by exposing light to film through lenses. My brother and myself tried to recreate them long before video was an option. My brother built models and photographed them as 35mm slides. The slides would be projected onto a screen and a skateboard used to move the projector! Then they'd be reshot onto 8mm film.

What equipment did you start off using?

Slides. Most music audio visuals were done with slides (e.g. The Reels and the Human League). They were the only things bright enough - video was far too feeble. Computers started to get places with the Atari 800, but still only as a source for slides. I also used film loops - 8mm film fed through a projector and then joined into a loop.

Favourite moments?

Usually when we introduced a new mechanism video synthesiser in the early '80s or OpenGL rendering in the early '00s - and the results jumped 'up a level' if you know what I mean. Suddenly there was a new potential.



Old gear vs new gear comparisons?

I can't define a point at which gear went from old to new but I can say that a point occurred when abstract visuals became concrete - were images of known things. That state-change has occured a few times in different working methods - in computing it came in 1987 with the Amiga and DigiView - but in live graphics it came later.



Tom Ellard in situ. 1988

How have your creative processes evolved?

Throughout the '90s computers were too slow for real-time and so it was a matter of generating frames and dumping them to videotape - the results were increasingly static video compared to the '80s. Since about '96, real-time has started to reappear. However, I'm still mostly grounded in pre-calculated graphics because the image quality is an issue for me. I would rather pre-calculated good work than real time twiddly (I HATE anything fractal or hippysplat) - the maturation of OpenGL and the new graphics cards are now able to equal prerendered video, so I can tell the stories I want to tell in real time. I believe in content.

The evolution of 'visuals' over the 90s?

I am not sure what the fascination was with rotating doughnuts. I guess all early 3D software was able to create a doughnut and rotate it - so that's what you got. I myself once bought a real doughnut and hung it on a string, digitised that and used it as a video for a band. Around the early mid ninetees the whole hippysplat thing went way out of control - mandelbrots and feedback everywhere. I hated it - it was not saying anything at a time when there was a lot that could have been said. The point worth making here is that performance video has yet to escape a trivial 'eye candy' level. It still is assessed in terms of 'what equipment/technique' - how 'clever'. More mature artforms such as film have been able to escape that level. I have seen very few video works that made me cry.

VIDEO SUBVERTIGO

Ian Andrews

One half of the legendary and politically effervescent Video Subvertigo, and well known in video circles for his modification to the Panasonic MX10 mixer, which enabled luma-keying and black level adjustment. Aside from a lengthy span as video performer, Ian also has a hefty catalogue of produced music under his belt – as part of Non Bossy Possee, Organarchy and many aliases such as Disco Stu. Try <www.radioscopia.org/iana> for an extensive list of his AV exploits.



John Jacobs

The 'JJ' half of Video Subvertigo is a constantly provoking Sydney artist with a strong community pedigree — working as part of the Jellyheads & Vibetribe collectives, the Organarchy & Non Bossy Posse tekno groups & producing radio at Radio National. Aside from cratefuls of VHS montages, he has also developed a stack of tracks available at the anticopyright site: <www.mpfree.cat.org.au.>

What equipment did u start off using?

Panasonic mx10 video mixer was the brain of the operation. Often we used 3 of them all connected together with absurd feedback loops. They were all modified to do full luminance key with video instead of background colour. We used a variety of cameras. My favourite was a JVC 3tube KY1900 that produced beautiful soft feedback, and John Jacobs' Tri-cam which was a special hand built tripod with the camera facing straight down towards a monitor which swivelled on huge industrial bearings. We would control the video feedback from the cameras with Arlunya processing amplifiers and Sony colour correctors. We also used Amigas playing animation loops and Fairlight CVI.

Favourite moments?

Sometime in the early '90s Meatbeat Manifesto came out and played at a huge party in Sydney (the name I will not mention). There were massive video projections and Subvertigo were supplying most of the images. The cops arrived half-way though the night and herded every one out. While they were doing this out the words 'fuck the police' flashed continuously on the screens.



KIRSTEN BRADLEY

Kirsten started out regularly performing solo in Sydney, creating lush live video for The Bird, Prop and other artists, before merging with Tonescope in Melbourne and producing several well received outdoor performances. She has also done some large scale video in theatre productions along the way.

Early Inspirations?

Fuzzy Logic crew in Sydney, Xmix on miscellaneous televisions and experiencing the Tokyo Equinox parties. Getting a 7300/200 Mac with video in-built!

What equipment did you start off using?

I lied my way into the craft – got myself a national tour with The Bird, then went and immediately hocked my entire music studio and swapped it for a VJ rig – MX50, 4 tapedecks, a projector, 5 monitors and kilometers of cabling, all housed in old suitcases with foam stuck inside. I then went on tour and learnt how to use it all – rigging 3 projector shows as I went. I had a leatherman though, so I was sorted.

Favourite moments?

Making video with my sweetheart and being allowed to talk about visuals in bed at 3am. First night of VJing at a bush party with Tesseract, Morph and Oishii – they got me tripping and then stuck me on all this gear I'd never seen nor used, it all made sense for some reason. Re_Squared, cause we finally got to do a site-specific work with a decent budget. Birdcage, cause it rocked my heart and soul and everyone came together to cover a building in light and it was just damn special.

Landmark events where live video went 'next level'?

When I figured out how to use my mixer at the first Bird Show in Newcastle (thanks to mr Nick Ritar who had shown up to have a look).

What you don't miss about the 'early days'? The size of the rig and the packdown time.

How have your creative processes evolved? I know what I like, and I know how to make it.

Old gear vs new gear comparisons? Old was tactile, new is powerful – it's a tradeoff.



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JOHN POWER

Now sporting a beard large enough to store floppy disks in, John has long championed animation and computer graphics in Melbourne, and as part of '2Loops', took his visual performances across Australia and parts of Asia. Apart from lecturing at RMIT he transforms game engines into live video manipulators in his spare time.

Early Inspirations?

Kaleidoscopes. Josie and the Pussy Cats on Saturday morning TV, and the general pop-art glam of later 60s early 70s TV (eg. Batman, Banana Splits, Get Smart, Doctor Who titles). Wayan Kulit (Indonesian shadow puppets) doing scenes from the Ramayana when I lived there in 1972. The climactic AV 'conversation' in Close Encounters Of The Third Kind. Scripting computer graphics on Apple IIs in 1981. Studying with Paul Brown and doing my first 3D video in 1986. Learning about Kinaesthetics and Klee, Kandinsky and Fleischer's work into 'simultaneity' at the Bauhaus. Steve Middleton's manipulated projections with Don't Shoot the Messenger at the Mind-a-Maze parties, early 1990s. Studying experimental film with Arthur Cantrill in 1992.

Favourite moments?

Dale Nason and I did a video mix alongside Alan Bamford in the back room of Newcastle's Cambridge Hotel during 2002 Electrofringe with a DVcam, a VHS deck, and an RCA lead. I was just pulling the lead out of one machine and sticking it in the other, sometimes jiggling the lead for a sprinkling of glitchiness. The crucial ingredient was the footage Dale had shot of himself photocopying a dead cat. It took the staff a while to realise what was going on, and once they'd all had a good look they kicked us out.

Performances that went really well?

2Loops did something like 100 shows at Centriphugal, and a few of those nights were pretty packed and crazy, with people really aware of -and enjoying - the images responding to the sound. I once mixed defocused static with video feedback for about 45 minutes, and later had a girl explain that not only did she know where and when I had shot this 'crowd footage' (of a great gig she'd been at), but which light tower I would have climbed to get the shot.

Landmark events where live video went 'next level'?

2Loops did quite a few shows at the Prince Of Wales in 2000-2001 for the 33 1/3 series where we had more ambitious rigs with digital video feeds,

stacks of TV monitors facing the crowd. The DIs and performers were great, and the

productions were quite well put together. We did eight hour sets, and sort of planned them in big thematic slabs.

What you don't miss about the 'early days'?

Carrying equipment up and down stairs. Not getting

How have your creative processes evolved since

Every VJ who likes to mix live learns to keep their content pretty sparse, so there's room to add things when you mix it. Early material I used involved lots of pretty involved 3D animation and lots of movie clips. I hardly do anything figurative anymore, relying more on abstract composition.

Old gear vs new gear comparisons?

Non-linearity is hard to beat. Many people seem to be going for the software patching paradigm, although I'm more interested in what a game engine can do simply because there's much less data to fuss over.



WADE MARYNOWSKY/SPANKY/AC/3P

Convict-era Australia's best known Booty House producer, and long-time 8-bit AV pin-up boy, Wade's been simultaneously testing bass bins and projectors for many a year. Recent projects include soundtracking a performance artist submerged in a glass tank of live eels and performing an AV mash-up onboard a Finnish ferry. <www.imperialslacks.com/wade>

Early Inspirations?

auv-i, tddy, 242.pilots, Farmers Manual, Pimmon, Francisco Lopez, Yasaona Tone, Dada, surrealism, Clan Analogue, post arrivalists, Toy Death, EBN, negativeland, Bloody Fist, Elefant Traks, Video Subvertigo, early Kinselas.

What equipment did you start off

Apple 575, 33mhz, 36mb of ram, 8 bits of power!

Favourite moments?

My first gig at Memory Loss at the Landsdowne, a woman danced wildly to an ambient set, Perth - having trapeze artists in front of my visuals was pretty weird, video stealth ninja was the best when we took over a Starbucks wall for around 40mins

What you don't miss about the 'early

Carrying around a desktop machine that usually crashed during my sets.

How have your creative processes evolved since then?

Into real time live inputs and increased automation. I've explored many different techniques.





release their debut album 'Louden Up Now'



!!! (pronounced 'chk chk') are destined to be one of the most talked about artists of 2004. They are a live seven-piece, electro punk funk mutant disco house killing machine.
!!!'s new album 'Louden Up Now', released on the Warp label, features "Pardon My Freedom" (as heard on Triple J) and "Me and Giuliani Down By The School Yard".

'Louden Up Now' is a serious experiment in getting down

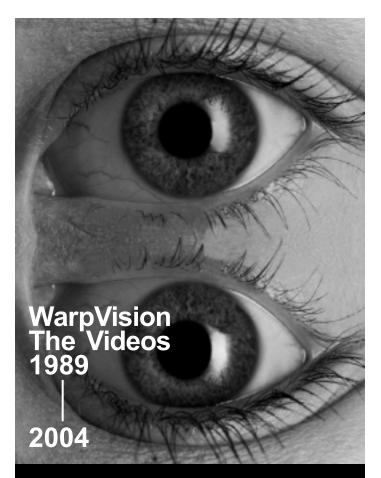
"as good an argument as you'll find for dance and guitars co-existing rather than living separate lives... brilliant" Jockey Slut

"acid-bleeding, cowbell-tapping new groove brilliance" NME

"lean white electro-funk... a Standout" Time Out

"nigh-on irresistible" The Independent





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TESSERACT

Cindi Drennan & Justin Maynard

Tesseract (Research Laboratories) are amongst Sydney's most prolific 'creators of immersive visual environments' in recent times. Cindi continues to move them away from 'screen rectangles' and into screen sculptures, installations and performances at odd shaped buildings like the Opera House. Justin is also a qualified rigger, a coder, and co-organiser of many ludicrously complicated audiovisual events. <www.tesseractvisuals.com>

Early Inspirations?

Cindi: my background was in painting and film-making; live video performance was a progression, using events, architecture and screen sculptures as a canvas for ideas @ 25 fps. We were influenced by prolific and experienced VJs like John Jacobs, Emile Rasheed from Area NotArena, who were tremendously encouraging and this provided inspiration for directions to explore, or avoid.

Justin: I was attending an Apple world wide developer's conference in San Jose in 1996 where the Apple Game Sprockets group had a party in a warehouse. An electronic band noodled on stage, but the entire back wall was covered in beautiful movement and colour, which I tracked down to Greg Jalbert who was performing with his own software bliss paint (www.imaja.com). That was the moment I realised I wanted to get into live video.

What equipment did you start off using?

Whatever we could access, we were hungry to try everything - initially Justin used a 7500 Mac running Blisspaint, Cindi created sequences using traditional animation techniques, combined these with footage we shot and manipulated ourselves. We recorded every single show we did, watching back to learn from our work (we've recorded hundreds of hours, it's fascinating to watch the progression). Our 2nd mixer was a modified Panasonic MX-10, adopting the mod devised by Ian Andrews and John Jacobs (Video Subvertigo). The immediacy of response and the control of image using knobs became integral to our show, and we eventually colluded with our electronic engineer friend, Brian Murray, to modify an MX-12 for higher quality, which is what we still use at many performances.

Favourite moments?

Freaky Loops 98, 99 were the biggest events we had ever played at in those early days, and were exciting events that brought together all sorts of musicians in a fundraiser for 2SER. Early Liquid Labyrinth parties were special. Perhaps the most special was 'Life the Universe and Everything' in 2000, where we played a bogus CNN report at midnight... almost tricked a few people into heading back to Sydney for those 'Y2K buggy ATMs spitting cash out onto the streets'.



Landmark events where live video went 'next level'?

Electrofringe, for bringing together VJs from around Australia (www.projectroom.com/ef2k). It generated many positive connections, ideas and projects. It led to the formation of the vidi-yo nexus, which helped us all keep in touch (www.vidi-yo.com) At Electrofringe in 2000 we all performed for each other, with each other in a group show. There were great experiments like the mega-video mixing machine on the last evening, which ended up inspiring our Video Combustion project, which is a live ensemble performance by an 'optical orchestra' www.videocombustion.org



How have your creative processes evolved?

From the beginning we've been committed to live (audio) visual performance as an important new screen-based artform (and culture), and using that as a basis we continue to explore and evolve the concept of illuminative art, live improvisation, screen sculpture and audiovisual architecture... all of which require loads of think time, planning, prep aside from the actual live performance itself. The creative investment means this is a full time occupation, and we tend to do fewer, larger projects. We partner with collaborators, and initiate more of our own projects these days.

Old gear vs new gear comparisons?

Cindi: Despite the laptop evolution and all the small stuff, we still lug loads of equipment to shows because the quality we strive for is only possible with the bigger processers/faster drives etc of the desktop computer. Digital Video and DVD are integral new additions, no lugging crates of VHS these days. Justin: I think that modern laptop loop based techniques really lose something in the way of visual surprises and serendipity from the old mixing up hours of VHS.

ENDA MURRAY /THE HEADCLEANER

With the thickest Gaelic accent on the Australian VJ circuit by a long mile, Enda has continued on from his VJing to produce many provocative award winning media projects, always tackling social justice and environmental issues on the way. <www.virusmedia.com.au>

Early Inspirations?

Dabbling with Super8 film loops at small reggae sound system gigs in Coventry when helping out a mate who'd 'liberated' a video wall (20 x Barco 36 inch video monitors from his workplace). I began to collect material from BBC wildlife films and an eclectic collection of avant garde film sources to play at parties. I pirated some early computer graphic work from the Museum of Contemporary Art in London and hey presto, I was on the road. Matt Black from Coldcut was also an early influence. I moved to Australia in 1996 and through Undercurrents contacts I hooked up with the CATV (Community Activist Techknowledgy) people. I was very impressed with John Jacobs' passion for VJing and his energy helping people starting out. Video Subvertigo were taking VIjing to a respected place, which was only fitting given the amount of energy that went into it.

What equipment did you start off using?

2 VHS players and an MX10 mixer... I never really moved over to computer. Prior to buying my first LCD projector I was in the habit of liberating a monster 3 gun CRT (Cathode Ray Tube) projector from the city council where I worked and setting it up in fields outdoors (I'm sure the technicians who guarded it during the week would have had heart attacks had they known). I was always more into narrative than spectacle and was always trying to create sense from the snippets of material I had. I would always have a tape ready in the video machine in case something worth recording came on. Very DIY.

Favourite moments?

In more recent times I've concentrated on producing images rather than projecting but I do feel rather proud of my role in the 'Boat People' projection onto the Sydney Opera House. It was definitely a moment when projections were taken to the 'next level'.

What you don't miss about the 'early days'?

Lugging 20 flight cased monitors around was a bugger. On one occasion we had set up the video wall at a cheesy rave only to be told by the promoter that it was 6 inches off centre and we should take it all down and move it six inches.

TIM GRUCHY

Mixing video since the late '80s RAT parties, Gruchy was a founding member of the audiovisual band Vision 4/5, and designer of their interactive AV performance systems. Tim now runs the Gruchy Productions visual imaging and events company.

Early Inspirations?

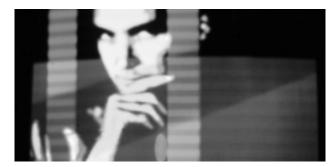
Stephen Jones / my sister Jane / Buckminster Fuller. GTK.

What equipment did you start off using?

Mid seventies Black and White reel to reel thanks to Brisbane Community Video Access Centre and QUT students Union.

Favourite moments?

The warehouse party scene in Brisbane in the eighties. Improvising everything. People bowing in homage to the screens. The RAT parties in Syd in the late eighties. RAT NY88 – the first time we did nine projectors surrounding the Hordern when E was first hitting the scene in a big way. One party in the Hordern particularly when the whole floor went into spontaneous group dance moves. The time we put 2 starvision (massive outdoor CRT arrays) screens in the RHI (Royal Hall of Industries) which was also the first time a lighting director ever asked me to turn the screen down.



Performances that went really well?

RAT late eighties – big shows, big budgets, big ideas, big crowds, big fun. Vision 4/5 performance in the Horden. The *Humid* album launch at the Metro in '95. The DIVA awards, where video design is worked into the whole structure of the show including stage design the presenters / mutiple venues. The year the whole Hordern cried when Carlotta entered the hall of fame – superb spontaneous video mix. Some of the Mardi Gras and Pride shows where we designed live shows integrating performers and video in complex ways.

What you don't miss about the 'early days'? Rigging.

How have your creative processes evolved since then?

Gotten more focussed - prefer shows.

Old gear vs new gear comparisons?

Gear – I love it all – the smell and feel of old analogue hardware, its hands on interface even though I hated it at the time and always wanted better control that went beyond the evolutionary hangover. Digital software based tools for their compactness, flexibility and precision – but I still want better interfaces/pseudo randomness.



JASON GEE

Aside from a long-time history of live video experiments in Syd, Jason Gee is also renowned for performing crunchy audio with Garry Bradbury as 'Size'.

Early Inspirations?

The television cutup work of Ian Andrews and John Jacobs, everything by Severed Heads and the radio show 'Stalking the nightmare' on 2MBS. Severed Heads live.

What equipment did you start off using? Amiga 1000

Favourite moments?

The Australian Video Festival (1989) opening party where I had 30 identical TVs linked with RF cables all in a row and the signal got weaker as it got to the last.

Performances that went really well?

A Big Day Out where we had massive programmable cube video wall and John Jacobs had organised 5 layers of down stream keying.

What you don't miss about the 'early days'? Calibrating the grid on old video projectors, animating using frame by frame methods and storing the results on floppy disks.

How have your creative processes evolved?

My work now attempts to bring a more narrative context to the environment. The Psychedelic experience approach to visuals should be taken out and shot.

Old gear vs new gear comparisons?

You would have to say new, although I have a huge respect for where things have evolved from



ff your appetite has simply been whet, there's lots more on the web at **cyclicdefrost.com**

OTHER LIVE VIDEO NOTABLES

Stephen 'Indiana' Jones: Former Severed Head, used self-assembled video synthesisers and pattern generators as Severed Head's vidician during the '80s. <www.culture.com.au/brain proj.>

Steve Middleton: Created massive globally toured visual installations in the early 90s, produced the first net telecast from Australia in 95, worked with Stelarc on robotics and is now researching a Doctorate in AI at RMIT. http://home.vic-net.net.au/~stevem

Adam 'Mu Magic': Charismatic Brisbane VJ & visual producer, who passed away earlier in 2004.

Lalila: Sydney duo with sophisticated home-coded audiovisual linux shenanigans and av flair.

Morph: Syd Fairlight, live pixel & VJ Forum enthusiast.

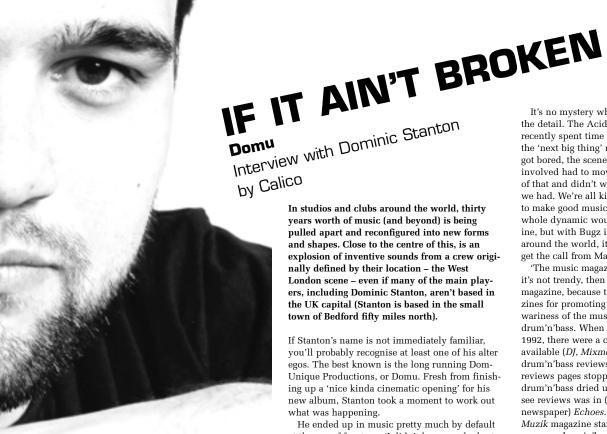
Olaf Meyer: Has built his own laser harp, turned a crystal Ball into a visual theremin and performed many, many melbourne gigs: http://olaffalo.i.am/

Chris Lange / Oishii: Melbourne creator of the VJ software, SVi: www.oishii.org.

Richard Byers / Superlight: best known for his cinematic, textural & vectoral contributions to Frigid.

Kim Bounds: One half of 2 Loops & long-time Melbourne pixel-ist now running community digital media projects @ ACMI.

Dale Nason: Long-time contributor to the Melb Centrifugal feedback massive, and photocopier of dead cats.



*** 'When you play your really experimental stuff and it doesn't work you go away thinking, "well what's the point of me making it if no-one's going to dance to it?"

In studios and clubs around the world, thirty vears worth of music (and beyond) is being pulled apart and reconfigured into new forms and shapes. Close to the centre of this, is an explosion of inventive sounds from a crew originally defined by their location - the West London scene - even if many of the main players, including Dominic Stanton, aren't based in the UK capital (Stanton is based in the small

If Stanton's name is not immediately familiar, you'll probably recognise at least one of his alter egos. The best known is the long running Dom-Unique Productions, or Domu. Fresh from finishing up a 'nice kinda cinematic opening' for his new album, Stanton took a moment to work out what was happening.

town of Bedford fifty miles north).

He ended up in music pretty much by default at the age of fourteen. 'I didn't have much else to be into, I was just a scrawler, not big on sport or anything.' So twelve years ago he bought turntables and soon after began mixing jungle and was producing within a year. He sent out demos and 4 Hero's Reinforced label showed interest, bringing him on board. 'I was only seventeen, but I moved up through Reinforced and then to 2000 Black and Archive. Then this scene kind of happened so it was all a smooth progression really.'

This scene is now better known as broken beat, but it is a true melting pot, in retrospect, an almost inevitable result of the genre clash of club culture. Taking the familiar ingredients of dub and dancehall, jazz and rare groove, hiphop, house, garage, electronics and drum'n'bass, the menu is contorted into unpredictable directions, and most people now identify the style by its intricate and irregular rhythms.

With the emergence of Jazzanova and IG Culture in the late '90s, support from DJs like Gilles Peterson and Patrick Forge, great (if slightly confused) press and critical acclaim, they were touted as a potential next big thing and seemed set to explode.

It's no mystery why they didn't if you look at the detail. The Acid Jazz and Big Beat scenes had recently spent time in the limelight after wearing the 'next big thing' mantle, but when the press got bored, the scenes faded away and the artists involved had to move on. 'We were all conscious of that and didn't want to spoil the good thing we had. We're all kind of on the breadline trying to make good music, and if that changed then the whole dynamic would change.' It's hard to imagine, but with Bugz in the Attic playing festivals around the world, it can't be too long until they get the call from Madonna.

'The music magazines are so corporate that if it's not trendy, then it's not in the interest of the magazine, because they won't sell more magazines for promoting it, so they don't.' Stanton's wariness of the music media began with drum'n'bass. When he started buying records in 1992, there were a couple of music magazines available (DJ, Mixmag) and each had a drum'n'bass reviews page. But a year later the reviews pages stopped and coverage of drum'n'bass dried up. 'The only place I could see reviews was in (fortnightly black music newspaper) Echoes. It wasn't until '95, when Muzik magazine started, that you could find press on drum'n'bass again.'

'I see music that a lot of my friends make in the house page, the leftfield page, the hiphop page, it's always everywhere and in a way I think that's more creative than having a page of your own because you're spreading into so many different people's tastes.' And as soon as a sound has its own page you start to have people making music to get onto that page. The scene has resisted expanding from its pool of key players, but there has always been a network of crews outside the UK. These include people like Jazzanova in Germany, Straight Ahead and GAMM in Switzerland, Kyoto Jazz Massive in Japan, Titonton Duvante in the US, and even guys like Ennio Styles in Melbourne.

'I was quite lucky to get in, it was just through Reinforced and 4 Hero. They're hard bastards to impress and that's why there aren't a lot of new people coming in, because if someone gives you a CD and it's not good enough, it's not good enough and they don't have a record. I was quite lucky starting eight years ago and I did manage to build a name as being someone that was experimental... but there's being experimental

and having potential, and there's putting out a record that just isn't right. I think there's a lot of that now, people just want to put out music, so they start their own label and put out records that just aren't really accomplished.'

Stanton blames the advent of PC-based recording. 'People spend a week learning Logic or Cubase and they'll have a record out, they're just not ready.' Which suggests that Stanton's not into grime, or whatever you call the dark underbelly of UK garage giving birth to a deformed child (dubstep, 8bar, sublow). 'Grime is a lot of kids in skullcaps and Nike tracksuits making music on Playstations. The MCing is all about aggression and anger and frustration and airing your views and the beats are simple and dirty. It's great, that's what kid's music should be all about.'

So what ties broken beat music together? 'Attitude really, I think there just came a time where we all had an idea to stop doing the other music we were doing and do something different, and it was all around the same time.'

'People were experimenting, using classic song structure and playing that up a bit, misusing it. If you look back at the early broken stuff, all the early IG [Culture] stuff on People, Jazzanova and things like that, they're kind of song based and they have a lot of movement, but not a lot of form to them, they're quite free.'

Stanton complains that the scene has become clubbier since then. He's held a long-time DJ residency at London club night The Co-op, which has a reputation for blending underground beats with the songs that have become anthems at the club, and says it balances with the production in terms of making money, but musically it's not such a happy marriage.

'There are conflicts because Co-op has created a lot more dance floor tunes than there ever used to be, and it's made a scene, where before it was people experimenting. That's the nature of scenes, they settle down and form templates, but it's made everyone more conscious of what works in a club. So when you play your really experimental stuff and it doesn't work you go away thinking, 'well what's the point of me making it if no-one's going to dance to it?' There's this huge paradox, where if you're making 12 inches, a DJ has to buy it to be able to play it. Obviously there are different environments, but if you play it at the Co-op, where everyone is schooled and there for the music, if they don't dance to it you wonder what chance you've got of anyone dancing to it.'

'When you're looking at your music in that sense you can really lose a lot of experimentalism because you're so worried about the dance floor reaction.' Stanton found the drum'n'bass scene stifling when it began to settle into a format of rolls and beat drops and says, 'Even at Co-op there was a time when I could sense this formula looming over us. Now everyone has kind of checked themselves and they're tinkering around again and trying to do something new. But there are not enough people outside of the scene making music for us to play.'

They are appearing though. 'I can see similar things to where The Neptunes are coming from, but

they have this whole jiggy American thing, which I can't really get down with. But 'Crazy In Love' is a baad track, it's sampling the Chi-Lites with a fat break and a wicked vocal, and if you can do something like that with one of the best singers in the world then that's a great record.'

'Madlib's done the DJ Rels album, I really liked the first twelve, but the album is really dirty, scuzzy rough breaks and it's all a bit, not unlistenable, but kind of unplayable. Sometimes the Americans really hit the nail on the head though, like Timbaland, he says he was trying to make drum'n'bass but couldn't find the right sounds.'

Like all music scenes, broken beat has settled down over time, but if you take a look at some of the music coming out now – especially the challenging stuff on Stanton's Enter The Umod or IG Culture's New Sector Movements – they're definitely not slowing down. And that makes sense, because while the scene takes time to re-evaluate and consolidate the musical advances of the past, they're laying the groundwork for the future.

This process of consolidation is often the lead-in to some of the best music to come out of a scene, which makes it clear that broken beat is yet to reach its peak.



Umod's Enter the Umod is available on Sonar Kollektive through Creative Vibes

THE MANY FACES OF DOMU

While Domu is Dominic Stanton's main project, he's constantly releasing material and most recently dropped *Enter The Umod* on Jazzanova's Sonar Kollektiv label. 'Umod is about going back to messing around with samples, it's very tracky and was done in about 8 days on spur of the moment. It's a nerdy album for the heads, for the people that want to hear experimentation and sound manipulation. It's nice to strip it down and just get a groove sometimes and that's what Umod was about. I felt really glad when I did it, but now I want to get back and write songs and use some musicians and make a bit more of a masterpiece.'

'Vocals aren't that important to me, but I rry to include them as I know a lot of people are instantly taken by them. But the main thing is the rhythm; I'm really into the drum programming and the emotion it creates, that it leaves you feeling as though it's moved around a bit. All the music I make has at least two or three different sections. Whether it's techno, hiphop or whatever, I like to have a lot of emotional and rhythmic dynamics.'

The new album from Domu should arrive on Archive later in the year. He's hooked up with Yolanda, a ragga-ish MC who's worked with the Bugz as well as garage producer Spoonface and breaks duo Deekline & Wizard. 'It's shaping up to be a spacey theme, with samples from Battle of the Planets and Transformers, and I'm piecing together a story about someone arriving on another planet and trying to get home, a bit like ET but in robot form. I'm trying to write songs that are relevant to that, you know, the kind of similes about exploration of one's inner self and exploration of the world.'

Sonar Circle is where it all started for Stanton with early releases on Reinforced. 'I've always been a very complex producer — my drum'n'bass has so much going on, just to make up one beat I'd have four or five different tracks and beats going over one another, all these different high hats and things, it just gets a bit crazy at times.' Stanton still records under the alias from time to time when he 'feels like making some drum'n'bass'.

'And the rest are just one-off names I make up because I'm doing something that doesn't really feel like it's Domu.' Among these are Yotoko's deep broken techno (released on the Delsin label), Brazilian disco as the Star Wars inspired Bakura (Especial), the vocal broken beat of Rima (Compost, and a new album likely to drop on Sonar Kollektiv), Vaceo (Chillifunk), Zoltar (Sonar Kollektiv), Blue Monkeys (Spinning Wheel), Kudu (Bitasweet), Realsides (Sirkus) and Domu & Volcov (on Best Seven and Residual). He's also producing a vocal album for Nicola Kramer who sang on the Rima and Domu albums, which should finished by the end of winter.

'It's very complicated,' says Stanton of his prodigious, even by electronic music standards, array of alter egos. 'You just go round and round in your head, 'do I keep the nerds happy, do I keep the girls happy,' so that's why I have so many different names and so many different projects it's because I can afford to make different people happy at different times.'





LOCAL RELEASES

 $P_{Qcificq}$

 (P_{neuma})

Ian Andrews

Delayed Inaudible P2

 (P_{neuma})

lan Andrews has had a long and varied relationship with the electronic form. Since the '80s he has created experimental music in the form of tape loops, off kilter dub, mutant hiphop, plunderphonics and bizarre soundscapes under monikers like The Horse He's Sick, Cut, Target Audience, and Hypnoblob; but he is best known within the wider community for his work in the techno field as Disco Stu. Since finding some mainstream success with 2001's Englishman in Ibiza EP on Clan Analogue, Andrews has returned to his experimental roots. Pacifica, released on the newly established Sydney-based Pneuma label is a compelling, and at times quite beautiful testament to his ability to craft delicate and emotional soundscapes. Often quite dreamy in an otherworldly Phillip Jeck styled swirl, much of Pacifica is constructed around scratchy minimal lo-fi loops from vinyl so old, crackly and worn in, that it must have been dug

boxes in grandpa's back shed. Using small grabs of dialogue from fifties film, Pacifica has all the hallmarks of being as well worn as the vinyl that created it, with Andrews imbuing

the disc with a murky nostalgia of a more innocent time. Whereas Pacifica consisted of quite gentle and dreamy washes of loops, Delayed Inaudible P2 is much more beatfocussed, where the rotating pulse is established early, Pushed to the fore and looped percussively to form the basis of each cut. Whilst this process may initially seem heavy handed, surprisingly much of Delayed Inaudible P2 is about subtlety and minimalism, with Andrews developing each cut by carefully, often barely perceptively manipulating the warm washes of material that surround the central beat. It's mesmerising stuff, with what may initially seem like a by-product of the recording process such as a warm hum or gaggle of static slowly dipping in and out of earshot. Bob Baker Fish Because Of Ghosts

Your House is Built on a Frozen Lake New to me but apparently causing a stir are this Melbourne

trio, And I can understand why. There are plenty of bands exploring rock's outer borders but few with such verve and confidence. The six-track EP opener 'Upwards! Forwards! Towards the Sun!' plays with the sound we expect from raw guitar as it builds in intensity. There's Nowhere Else to Put Them consists of a field recording that stars a cooing pigeon and scratching noises plus a banjo. Originally an improvisational duo their expanded sound is working well, adding overdubs without disturbing the live essence. It's got a rousing emotional quality and a rough-around-the edges nature that's more warts-and-all than it is unsophisticated. The glockenspiel on 'You Fool (Your House is Built on a Frozen Lake) is there through necessity, not self-conscious arrivaen Vocals emerge from the background and if they are heading that way they'll make wonderful songwriters. The cello on closing track 'A Waltz for Berenice' is beautiful and I can easily imagine a vocal counterpoint. If you're a fan of the Constellation label this is worth checking. The sleeve is great too. Alex ollo

Blackletter

Junk Extensions

 $(V_{ibragun})$

The dense soup of DSP sound, minimal melody, distorted voice and bleeps that starts this album is simultaneously claustrophobic and expansive. Beats and looping melodies glue the next track 'Atom Driver' into a dark and intriguing excursion that self destructs before seamlessly merging into 'Change Agent' whose guitar melancholy hauls you through more DSP chaos, But it's a false sense of security as 'Form 22' consists of 30 seconds of digital distortion. The beautiful Tm

Always Talking' takes an ambient turn back into deep space. This album is full of new corners, but it's always with a purpose rather than change for change's sake, 'Shunt' is also a standout, a loping, looping harmonious drone with intriguing rhythm sounds. Musically I love 'Periscope' but the upfront DSP epilepsy of the drums reduces its listenability. The album loses some of its slightly caustic edge on

headphones where its magnificent depth is revealed. I'd have Junk Extensions on rotation if the mix brought more of Blackletter's musical sensibility to the fore. There's a truly beautiful album amongst all those clicks squelches. What is going on in Townsville? A great deal of talent that's for sure. Alex ollo

Bleepin' J Squawkins

 $Fl_{Oppy\ Disco}$

(Clan Analogue/Creative Vibes) It's great to see a predominantly live electro act such as Bleepin' J Squawkins finally sitting down in the studio and Putting together their debut album after their live shows in the last few years. Floppy Disco is a journey from electrohouse to synth-pop, there's even a touch of electro-clash, but from the very first track the listener is transported back to the '80s. There's an obvious love of vocoders on this release and some narrative vocal lines to keep you attentive. Some tracks I found to be reminiscent of Rephlex's DMX crew without the serious edge while others reminded me of the more disco-oriented music Bochum Welt has released, minus the melodic focus. One thing I can say about this release is Bleepin' J have chosen their style and stuck with it. While there seems to be quite a few artists revisiting the '80s at the moment, Bleepin' J appear to have a real passion for its cheesiness and the party vibe. In summary – it's a lighthearted and fun release for fans of the '80s to dance to. $Melinda\ Taylor$

$Bl_{iss\ n\ Eso}$

Flowers in the Pavement $(Obese\ Records)$

Hiphop should apply for a work-for-the-dole tax break. In a couple of short years all those scrawny backyard operations chuming out beats, running shows, distributing magazines and selling records have moved from the garage to the front room. For the Australian hiphop soldiers it's still a cottage industry, but when you check the development of some of the local product, you get a sense that big tings a'gwan. In particular,

a kieper records compilation

Kieper records returns with æther2, a compilation featuring some of Western Australia's finest exponents of electronica with tracks from Elemental, Pablo Dali, Audio Cephlon, Jaek, The Plastik Scene Manuel Bonrod, New Sirus Project, Anubis compleX and many others.

æther2, and Kieper's first release æther, are available through Couchblip! Distribution at:

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"features the finest in West Australian melodic and experimental electronica highly recommended,"

- In The Mix, June 2004



LOCAL RELEASES continued

Melbourne's Obese Records proudly represent with a hefty back catalogue dating to the year 2000, with releases from the Hilltop Hoods and Upshot, not to mention the numerous Culture of Kings compilations. Their latest long player is the debut album from Sydney's Bliss n Eso, and it continues the Obese tradition of releasing idiosyncratic, upfront local hiphop. Bliss n Eso have been making Sydney headz nod for a few years now. Experience pays, and the 17 cuts on Flowers in the Pavement are structured around sophisticated metaphor and clever metre. Tracks like the Triple J favourite Rubbed the Lamp the Wrong Way' are light on the hooks but are instead held together by punchlines and a party-time chorus. Moments in the flow remind me of the West Coast psychedelic crews like the Hieroglyphics and maybe Souls of Mischief, an approach complemented by production that rejects slamming razor beats for more cerebral studio licks and blunted tricks. Vagina Ice' works neurotic r'n'b beats around a minimal guitar lick, set next to a track like the irregular stolen polka of 'Clean in the Tub'. Flowers in the Pavement is a deceptively dense album: full of laddish appeal but balanced by peculiar turns, strong production values and a lyrical depth. Vaughan Healey Bokor & Pablo Reche

 $\mathit{Dialogue}$

 $(D_{reamland})$

Graduating from a series of three-inch singles, the majority of which celebrated the beauty of drone music, Melbourne's Dreamland Recordings have teamed up label honcho Bokor (aka Zac Keiller) with Argentinean sound artist Pablo Reche. Not surprisingly it's a drone-based work with subtle and evocative progressions and implementations of new sounds. Dialogue begins peaceful enough, a thin distant drone; flecks of fluttering static and a repetitive almost percussive skip. Within a Couple of minutes however things become somewhat more dense and sinister with a deep metallic hum introduced and some industrial sounding whooshes of what may be compressed air. Over the course of the single, half-an-hour-plus cut, the ground shifts repeatedly as the duo, possibly communicating and responding to each other, remove and reorder sounds in quite rapid succession before decreasing in volume and density, taking things down a notch and giving the piece a few minutes to breathe. Dialogue's strength is its unpredictability, in that it twists and turns through multiple techniques, through a dark minimal ambient drone territory and a busy semi-industrial landscape, where it seems to build then unexpectedly subside, creating a vast and compelling world where you can never be sure what's around the next corner.

$Decoder\ Ring$

 $Somersault\ OST$ (I_{nertia})

I first heard Decoder Ring when they upstaged The Yeah Yeah Yeahs a couple of years ago at Sydney's Annandale Hotel. Their tumblingly broad sweep of sound created such a powerful atmosphere, that when I first heard this I wondered whether someone at the record plant had put the Wrong CD in the box. Since getting together in 2001, an entranced media have gushed over the couple of discs they've released. But this stirring, richly textured soundtrack for the Cannes and AFI scooping film Somersault, expands their already evocative sound. It uses a sparse palette made up of the warm strummed guitar and Rhodes, occasionally sequenced beats and bass. Snippets of vocals from the film sparkle with character, and fans of Air's Moon Safari or the soundtrack from Lost In Translation will be elated. This is pretty and melancholic music. If you're sad, it may bring on tears, if you're not, it'll still make you feel a little wistful. Either way this beautifully musical score will stay with you Lawrence English

Ghost Towns (::Room40::)

The latest processed soundscape from Lawrence English once again explores a sense of place, this time celebrating the unique sounds of a landscape so few urban Australians experience frequently. Created from field recordings made in the remote settlements that litter the vast Australian plains. it is exotic, strange and powerfully evocative. It begins with a minimalism that gives equal space to silence and sound before the emergence of buzzing of power lines and insects. Deep and tuneless windy drones hover beneath the clanging of dry metal and the squawks of passing birds, as a fly Weaves in and out of DSP scratches. While some sounds have a watery quality – there is rain – the overall impression is of dryness, heat, and emptiness. The difficulty of this landscape is also present in the insistent and sometimes almost overpowering drones and creaks. Music exists as a plucked dryness, devoid of easy melody, before a thundering roll finishes the 18-minute piece. The formidable land that's evoked here is a constant source of discomfort to this nation's psyche, as alien to city dwellers as our indigenous population. A well-constructed and fascinating addition to the sound art canon that has something to say about its

Epsilon & Hedonist Chip

(self-released)

It was only the other day that I fired up a Commodore 64 emulator and loaded Firebird Software's seminal 8-bit drum machine toy Microrhythm. I used to spend hours in my early teens mucking around with Microrhythm and also with the various super-low-quality speech synthesiser and sample toys on the C64. So it is with an ear of nostalgia that I come to this 3" EP from Newcastle hardcore heavyweights Epsilon and Hedonist, both known for their releases on Bloody Fist and Killing Sheep. Imagine, if you will, hardcore and drum & bass filtered through the limited sound and timbral palette of the C64 and you

are close to what is on Chip - the crunchy snares and hi hats, the lack of any bottom end, and the video game synths sounds. Sebastian Chan

Full Fathom Five/Topology

 $F_{uture\ Tense}$ (V_{alve})

Taking all of eight minutes – the first track on Future Tense, 'OutlnOut', is a statement of intent for this collaborative effort between the lively Brisbane five-piece Full Fathom Five and Brisbane's champions of postclassical; Topology. Beginning in swells of orchestral flotsam and jetsam in a sea of moody electronics, it progresses to the relatively solid ground of a shuffling drum break, taut bass line and guitar arpeggio. Eventually the swells return, however, encompassing the beat and, in time, everything around it. Like opening statements in a debate, each side presented their strongest case -Topology leading off with their amorphous massed strings, only to be answered by the embodied syncopations of Full Fathom Five. It's in this spirit of conversational collaboration that the album proceeds promisingly and then seems to falter. Supported by an Australia Council grant, I'm sure the purpose was to bring established culture and street culture together into some kind of dialogue, but about halfway through, the album starts sounding like they've stopped chatting, with Topology getting all 'new music'-ed up on '5 Minutes from Machines' and Full Fathom Five lasciviously stroking a rather inadequate member in the sub-electro of Bad People Have Parties Too'. By the end of Future Tense it's as if Topology have stormed off into their room in a huff, only to return sheepishly for the finale, which turns out to be the lovely 'Spiral Coda'. Obviously it's difficult to tell exactly what role each member had to play, the liner notes being scant on details apart from writing credits (which do indicate at least some collaboration on each track). Suffice to say that when each group had a distinctive voice, such as in the first and last tracks, the resulting music was far more compelling. **DH**

K_{azumichi} Grime

Source_Guerra_2230" (P_{neuma})

Sydney-based sound artist Kazumichi Grime is known for his electronic processing and reprocessing, utilising drones, field recordings and voice to achieve drifting electronic vistas of sound. Here Grime has teamed up with London-based guitarist Anthony Guerra, a renowned textualist and improviser with a certain penchant for working with electronic artists. Whilst working with warbling masses of processed digital material at times, Guerra's 'Stich', with Melbourne based sonic adventurer Joel Stern, also ventured into almost melodic territory. The piece here is based on a collaboration the duo recorded in August 2002 following Guerra's appearance at the What Is Music Festival. Whilst that

release as a CDR, featuring odd scratching, backsource material is included in this ward masking, feedback and drones, Grime has returned and reprocessed the material providing a clearer perhaps more unified focus. The highlights are the longer cuts, which consist of a brooding underbelly of sound interrupted by occasional splatterings of sticky static, dull murmurs and oscillating drones. There's something inevitable about these cuts, something almost elegant as the sweeping fragments of melody build in density and tension without ever really ever really becoming frantic or difficult. Bob Baker Fish

As Minit, Berliners Jasmine Guffond and Torben Tilly, formerly of Sydney, create ambient soundscapes that are meditative, hazy, and hallucinatory. If the idea is not terribly (Staubgold) innovative or original, their particular take on it is, as well as being more musically satisfying than the genre-norm. Three of the four compositions on Now Right Here were rines or the four compositions on you right frete were created in 2002, but the standout title track, is the latest and the longest at close to twenty minutes. An epic drone, wavering tones chime as they grow through subtle modulations and incremental changes into a dense hypnotic mass. Suspended rootlessly, the work shifts gears dramatically halfway through when a dominant bass line appears, anchoring the piece beautifully as its massive bulk wends its glacial way. Braying stuttering noises eventually consume the bass and the piece ends with a repeating piano chord remaining and the york sustains ample interest while developing at such a measured pace is evidence of the control Minit exercise. While the other pieces are credible, they pale somewhat in comparison as none is as epic or consequential in scope as 'Now Right Here.' Soft droning tones and creaking sounds on 'CG,' build towards a dense blur, while 'IJ Muiden' features what sounds like heavilyprocessed piano sounds and transforms them into a mass of hazy patter. The noisy beginning of prickly, crackling static in 'IJ Variation' startles, but it too gradually quietens until it resembles a fuzzy recording of electrical wire tones paired with processed watery surf. Minit demonstrate an impressive ability to conjure dense clusters of abstract sound without incurring a corresponding loss in musicality. Ron Schepper

Static Tones is an apt title for this work by Melbourne sound Bruce Mowson artist Bruce Mowson, perhaps best known as the co-director Static Tones of the Liquid Architecture Sound Art Festival. Generating an (Cajid Media) unchanging mass of sound imbued with an internal repetitive rhythm, Mowson has produced three twelve-anda-half minute tracks that, though they are in reality static (as the title suggests)static, appear to be changing quite subtly. This is a project that actively invites your ears to play tricks on you, which they inevitably do when faced with such an unmoveable slab of sound. In order to make sense of what you are hearing, your ears are drawn to highlight particular aspects of the sounds, in turn breaking up the piece and revealing previously hidden internal sounds and

cadences. Though it's not noise music as such, Mowson is working with thick, deep tones that can become quite intense at high volumes. What may be more disquieting however, is the concept behind the work, and the unshakeable feeling that all listeners are somehow just guinea pigs in Mowson's sonic experiments. Bob Baker Fish

Ponyloaf is a three-piece electronic outfit from Brisbane con-Ponyloaf sisting of ex-Regurgitator keyboardist Shane Rudken along O Complex side Dan Templeman and Damian Lewis. The album begins with a dramatic and cinematic track Why Breed Pt 1', which is very reminscent of Plaid. Not content to stick to this tip, they take their music along a vastly windy path on this release, reaching into just about every genre barrel that might be within arm's length. Junkie Nights' begins with intricate beat programming, distorted synthlines and wintry melodies and is diverted at regular intervals to a section containing slightly cheesy vocodered vocals and underlying four-to-thefloor beats. It's a little distracting as the the song stands on its own without these vocodered sections. 'Aargh's Townhouse' is a mix of heavy metal, grinding, thrashing guitars and electronica. 'Nhaehe' stands out as one of the most beautiful tracks on the release - simple, beautiful and gritty. Capturing the vibrance of their live show, the album is appropriately raw and another example of the quality electronic music starting to emerge regularly from Australia.

Melinda Taylor

Qua (aka Cornel Wilczek) starts his latest audio outing with Painting Monsters On Clouds a simple, short statement of intent in the form of Painting Monsters'. It's an introduction of sorts, both suggestive of the (Surgery) sound textures to be encountered on disc, and acting as a guide to the overall mood of the compositions on this record. Qua has developed a fine sensibility to his work, an understanding of the way that melody, rhythm and texture can be used in creative ways to illustrate a theme or feeling. Tracks like Night Sailing have an amazingly visual quality to them they ring out with conventional melody interplays, but like Tortoise and other groups with strong layering abilities, the quality of each section of the piece working with and over the top of each other generates a unique phrasing that heralds strong tension and release. The same can be said of pieces like 'Happy Domestika' and 'Luckybuster'; each carry a formidable barrage of divergent sounds. A well conducted and composed piece of work, electronics riddled with per-Sonality and expression. Lawrence English

Triosk

Anyone who caught Triosk performing live with Jan Jelinek Anyone who caught those performing live with lan Jennes. The this year will testify that they are quite an amazing trio. The Moment Returns Sydney-based crew of accomplished jazz musicians, all in (Leaf/Inertia) their twenties, burst on to the international scene with their 1+3+1 album for Berlin's ~scape label last year. For some reviewers it was difficult to determine what was

much at the same time as the ~scape record, and it shares Leaf it becomes much clearer. Moment Returns was recorded pretty much of its predecessors fascination with sampling and resampling. Adrian Klumpes lays down some lugubrious piano motifs and Ben Waples' double bass creates the foundation for Lawrence Pike's wild scattergun drumming and polyrhythms to flutter above. More than just processing and applying DSP effects to their instruments and samples, Triosk's music is properly 'futuristic jazz', by seamlessly incorporating these electronics into the basis of their improvisations. Sebastian Chan

Twotone

Although emerging from Brisbane, Ryan Gobbe's Twotone sounds closer to Germany. Recalling equally the glitch Cinecity micro-rhythms and minimalism of Mille Plateaux artists (Bug Records)and the hissing dubscapes of Rhythm and Sound, it's an impeccably-produced collection. Yet it's warmer (maybe all that sun?) and it has its feet squarely on the dancefloor in a way that brings Herbert's house tracks to mind in its use of twitchy syncopation. The four are solidly on the floor as Twotone sets up a groove and pursues it, occasionally into more melancholy dubinfluenced territory ('Representative' and 'Fake Newsreels'). Headphone listening is recommended if you want to catch all the carefully-crafted layers of intricacy. There is no obvious standout track as the quality is there all the way, though that does mean it may lack the club 'hit' that would draw in more listeners. My only criticism would be a lack of variety that leads me to tune out over the length of the album - a downtempo excursion or less club-focused track or two wouldn't go amiss. But the flip side of that is that if you love track one you'll love them all. Alex ollo

Upshot

Make it Happen Sydney live hiphop band Upshot have (Creative Vibes) struggled for the past few years to realise their particular musical vision - one part hiphop, one part modal jazz; one part rhythm, one part harmony - the path they tread is fraught with danger. If they play too loose they look like wankers, if they play too straight they become a very expensive 5 person replacement for an MPC. On Make it Happen they manage to stay on course for most of the way, occasionally stepping into but in the process they come . When they succeed, as in the moody shift of 'Not Working', it's like opening up a window of new musical potential for hiphop beyond simple boombap and chord stabs, releasing it from its 16

LOCAL RELEASES continued

pad/16 bar confines. Not that hiphop needs saving - but an occasional weekend away would be nice. Notoriously demanding of their MCs, Upshot manage to coax good per formances from each of them, but at times they seem either constricted to extreme versions of themselves – Quro coming on all fire-n-brimstone preacher in Leviathan and Brass rhyming in his quickly nasal prose in 'Breathe' – and then at other times putting the MCs in distinctly unfamiliar territory - the Herd's Urthboy does a chorus that verges on metal in 'About to Break'. It's this forcing of issues that sometimes grates – a situation reflected in the song-writing, especially in choruses – tracks like 'Fire' move from the sublime verses to somewhat contrived 'big moment' singalongs. Although not a criticism per se – as it's obviously a consequence of their high musical ambitions, when tracks settle into more natural progressions between verse/chorus in such tracks as Tango' it all feels so much more satisfying. Nevertheless an interesting album that falters for the same reasons it succeeds – and the hidden space jam shows they retain a sense of humour. DHVarious Artists

 $D_{ecomposition}$ $(Sound\ _{Punch})$

The cheese, The lack of emotion. The lack of subtlety. Oh God, I have a love-hate relationship with '80s movie soundtracks. And with shimmering synth, a wailing guitar, slap bass and again that overwrought cheesy synth I'm back in the midst of that fantastically terrible world populated by Harold Faltemeyer (Fletch), Wang Chung (To Live and Die in LA) and whoever that dude was who did that rockin' Soundtrack to Magnum. Askii's (Adam Milburn's) 'The One' is but the opening track to Decomposition, a compilation of music for short film, interactives and installations by a gaggle of innovative, genre-bending and fearless local Melbourne musicians and sound artists, all curated under Philip Brophy's Sound Punch records. Aside from the hysterical and traumatic trips down memory lane, there's a restrained electro ditty from Two4k, some gloomy, windswept atmospheric work from Tim Catlin, some cheeky, electrospace pop with more sides than a Rubik's Cube from Cornel Wilczek (Qua), and a sort of jolly, watered-down Disney-does-space-end-creditstheme from Brophy. Everything is here, the music touches on movie soundtrack conventions then moves fearlessly off into unknown or unexpected realms. There are no studios bearing down on these folks and the freedom is palpable in the terrain they traverse. **Bob**

Various Artists Iconic

 $(P_{syHarmonics})$

Try and wipe those Dave Hughes suntan commercials from your mind and consider that for over ten years Psy-

 $H_{armonics\ has\ provided\ a\ unique\ platform\ for\ Australian}$ artists to produce challenging, interesting and predominantly electronic, though regularly genre-crossing, music both with in Australia and across the world. Their compilations are always an arresting experience and generally dominated by the ubiquitous presence of Ollie Olsen who continues to produce a startling array of diverse material in multiple guises. Here he produces tracks solo and collaborates in projects such as In Honour, Lion Feed, Third Eye, and Quark, skirting such diverse terrain as downtempo ambient electronics, restless tribal psychedelia, and melodic electronica. In recent Years other artists have also stepped up and made an impact, such as Shaolin Wooden Men, remixing one of their own charging rock n'roll jams here, or Ad Astra, who provides some tripped out new age electro rock on 'Billions'. Whilst David Thrussell's Black Lung offers the abrasive acid trance on 'Autocratic Zeit Shift', Melbourne duo Hesius Dome produce the show stopper in 'Aftermath', an unexpected mix of deep, lush ambience and a funky-assed bass line that is hopefully a taster for their forthcoming album. And then WEYEW, Eye from legendary Japanese outfit the Boredoms Pops up with a weirdo everything-but-the-kitchen-sink groove he recorded in '98 that is still leagues ahead of what is being produced today. So forget Dave Hughes, forget suntan cream and forget national pride. Psy-Harmonics is Iconic. This amazing collection further confirms it. Bob Baker Fish Various Artists

 $O_{Verland}$

 $(N_{ature strip})$

Naturestrip is a Melbourne label focussing on artists who incorporate environmental sound, field recordings and microphonics in their work. Only recently established, Overland is a vital and arresting document that displays Naturestrip's commitment to demonstrating the diversity of approaches and techniques in working with field recordings. Whilst it presents untreated urban sounds in a thriving Japanese metropolis via Toshiya Tsunoda's 'Reclaimed Land', and Brisbane artist Lawrence English's busy pitch-shifted and treated multi-layered audio collages of a trip to Tokyo and New York, the two most interesting pieces come from local settings. Joel Stern's 'Saltwort' sees the renowned sound artist and improviser let loose with two bottles of soda water, damaged cables and speakers and two binaural microphones. The results are a crisp, bubbling cacophony, in which he deftly integrates and manipulates feedback and electrics around a frenzied soda pop roar, before carefully manipulating the faulty electrics as the bubbles die. Tarab meanwhile builds from silence into a roaring, rumbling howl, creating a tense timbrel bed for his bubbling and scratching textures. All four artists display an inspiring and quite unexpected ability to transcend not just their tools but their physical environment to create a distinctly personal interpretation of their world. Bob Baker Fish

Darrin Verhagen $Black\ Frost$

 $(D_{orobo)}$

Darrin Verhagen is the 'real person' behind the mythical Shinjuku Thief. The music of Shinjuku Thief is filled with drama and tension, grand cinematic flourishes of gothic soundscapes, whilst

Verhagen in person and musically is somewhat less bombastic and much more amiable. He began using his real name as a way of pursuing his more minimal digital and glitch based material, and Black Frost is the second part of his final trilogy for Dorobo. Consisting of stark minimal soundscapes, dull drones, subtle electrics and guttural rumblings surrounded by a multitude of space, Black Frost is a daunting prospect. Despite the suggestion on the back cover that low volumes are recommended and headphones permitted, Black Frost bears an odd resemblance to Black Ice, the infernal noise record that preceded it. Whilst it differs dramatically in terms of tone, being at heart a dark ambient release, there is an unexpected similarity and distinctiveness in the way sounds and tones are introduced – albeit at polar opposite volumes. There are no beats, and few glitches in the place of beats, and textures fade in and out of this strange dark netherworld. A challenging, surprisingly minimal drone and avant-electric piece, Black Frost provides a curious and accomplished counterpoint to the aggression that preceded it. We've had noise, now minimalism, I wonder what's next? Bob Baker

Waiting for Guinness

The Show

(Independent/Vitamin)

It'd be easy to dismiss Sydney band Waiting for Guinness as a novelty, especially when on occasion they sound like outtakes from the soundtrack of the Muppet movie. However, the immediate appeal of their gypsy meets klezmer in the dunnys of a country pub while being serenaded by a mariachi band made up of Irish folk singers (with a dwarf named Ted calling bingo in the corner) just doesn't wear off. Somewhat of a concept album based around a fictional cabaret performance (each of the players has various noms de plume and sings/plays in character) the narrative thread that ties The Show makes for a coherent whole, despite the fact that it's as much Eastern Europe as it is Ellington. And despite the consumate musicianship it retains a sense of humour – and more importantly, under the thick blanket of intricate arrangements there are some poignant songs. Harry's Theme', a tale of busking, bludging and beer drinking is delivered by Bonkin' Dave Stephenson with a tender throated delerium; elsewhere 'The Lost Mariachi's' haunting melancholy competes for your tears with the lost love song Diamonds', delivered by the frayed silk tonsils of Marko Simec. The instrumentals, in particular the overwrought arabesque of 'Radio Novgorod', are just as fine. And the enductive of Addition of the control the performances to crackle with live energy. The Show is an album that sounds like everything else and nothing else, and that's its main strength. DH

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@C

©C are the Porto based electronic artists Pedro Tudela and Miguel Carvalhais. Regularly utilising field recordings, samples and strange electronic sounds, over the course of three V3 albums they have displayed a firm commitment to improvi sation and deconstruction, in creating new and interesting links via their internal electronic dialogue. Their second outing on the strange and uncompromising Portuguese Cronica label, V3 is significant in that it is culled from live performances and features the duo improvising with numerous collaborators, often in the electro-acoustic realm. Though all the pieces have come from their live work in 2003, they were later edited and remixed by @c. And the results are quite startling. Though the various ensembles have been shuffled throughout the disc, there are performances with guitarists, visual artists and percussionists, all of which illustrate @c's amazing ability to craft innovative and quite challenging soundscapes with multiple partners. The sounds verge on near silent improvised jazz, gorgeous droning strums of guitar, strange jittery electro speak, and high-pitched waves of electronic atmospheres, to some of the most uncompromising semi industrial improvised house music around. Perhaps due to its improvised nature, V3 feels incredibly freeform, yet thanks to the remixing the pieces always have a vague, thoroughly unexpected structure and always continue to develop. It's avant experimental electronics in its purest form. Startling and genre defying. Bob Baker Fish

A Hawk And A Hacksaw

It begins with the cry of a rooster and then an oriental sounding gong and before anyone can say 'Mice Parade', it's descended into a dense, vaguely Eastern, repetitive piano flurry, which then somehow, with the assistance of accordion, bass guitar and drums, has transplanted its mood to provincial France. It almost makes sense given that its PROVIDED A PARTIES IN ARROSS IMAGES SENSE GIVEN THAT IS CEREBUTY FOR THE SENSE FROM THE SENSE GIVEN THAT IS A France. Much of A Hawk And A Hacksaw is held together by repetitive, frantic and almost comical piano work

dion only serves to camp up the rustic, rural flavour of the that wouldn't be out of place in silent films. The presence of the accorwork, ensuring that A Hawk And A Hacksaw arrives some where between Tortoise and the frantic energy of Gypsy music. For the Leaf label, home to Susumu Yokota and Murcof, it's a peculiar and quite unexpected step, though there's undoubtedly something unique and carefully crafted about Barnes' work that no doubt attracted them to it. There are inspired and senseless, drunken, fireside stomps that end in crazed avant-garde soundscapes, twisted sound art pieces and then these beautiful baroque piano runs. Everything seems thrown in together and its ingredients really don't make sense, though it's saved by the fact that A Hawk And A Hacksaw's world is so inspiring, confusing and wonderful that concepts like sense no longer matter. Bob Baker Fish

Audio Active have managed to consistently stay true to the Audio Active Back to the Stoned Age spirit of reggae while not actually sounding like anything resembling Jamaican music, and since their days on On-U (Beat/Valve) Sound have been able to be quirky and individual without resorting to cheap gags or gimmicks... well, not too many. Still true to their stoner/spaceman roots (or schtick), Back to the Stoned Age features a huge doobie spaceship on the the studies Age reacties a ruge about spacesur on the cover and a dubious, if entertaining lyric sheet. They seem to have toned down the guitar antics and reclaimed the spirit of their golden Happy Shopper era, despite the chunky power chords of opener 'Weed Back' and 'Suckers'. By track three everything seems to settle down, with the melancholic synth everyuning seems to settle down, with the menantione symmetry pads of Stoned Age, preceding Frozen Head', with its incest sant treble skank and loping bassline counterpointing an understated chant, and the odd analogue bubbling of Tocomotive, all disblaying the collective ear for melody and timbre that make them so enjoyable in the past. By the skipping beat of Time Shock' and the vague glitchscape of Universal Joint' they have displayed a good half album's worth of interesting music, full of scratchy details, glistening delays and their peculiar melodic sensibility, and that's at least a quarter album more material than their last outing.

DH

Black Dice

Creature Comforts further cements the notion that American Creature Comforts outfit Black Dice are operating in their own distinct world making music that is simply without peer. A former punk (Fat Cat/ Inertia) rock outfit, at some point things changed drastically and they delved headlong into the experimental realm. Whilst the psychdelic wash that was 2002's Beaches and Canyons had a vague and loose semblance of the guitar, bass and drums world of their past, Creature Comforts, possibly their most gentle, tripped out work is also their most exploratory. Each track is bathed in strange effects that all seem to originate the strange effects that all seems to originate the strange effects effects effects effects effects effects effects nate from their guitar, and traditional song structures have well and truly been relegated to the past, with the sounds constructed with a baffling eccentric logic. For some the experience may be akin to listening to someone tool around with their guitar-effects board for 40 odd minutes, however

humour, and even compositional care in the way everything is constructed. Such is the diversity there is a real artistry, of the sounds they conjure, the squelches, burps, wails and or the sounds mey conjune, the squencies, outps, wans and squeaks, that many of the tracks sound like a night time field recording in a bizarre alien jungle, where everything is alive, competing for space and bouncing off each other. In this sense there are links to abstract electronica, yet also to the less beat-orientated work of the Boredoms. Creature Comforts is incredibly bold, well off the beaten track, and arguably one of the most progressive and original releases this year. It also feels just like their amazing Beaches of Canyon, that it's just another part of the journey – and if their stops are this abstract and wonderful, one wonders with anticipation about their next destination.

Bob Baker Fish

bLevin bLectum Once upon a time there was an experimental electronic $_{\rm Magic~Maple}$ duo called Blectum From Blechdom - emphasis on (Praemedia/Bleakhouse) mental I should think. This reviewer has a little secret to tell: I've never been at all convinced by Blectum. Always seemed really silly without any of the merits of, well you know – good silly music. I can't explain it better than that, but just as I enjoyed Kevin Blechdom's madcap performances when she toured Australia a few years ago, I find that bLevin bLectum is an intriguing and enjoyable affair. Pelican' Parts One to Four aurally describe what must be a very disturbing adventure for the eponymous beast (Part Three is subtitled 'Extinction'), with drones, deep bass thuds, insistent tribal beats and hard-panned duelling xylophones all through the mix. Abrasive programming is offset by some genuinely beautiful passages and surprising melodies - think Severed Heads meet Pimmon and you won't be far wrong. Hopefully this release will also raise the profile of Praemedia, whose releases traverse the interface between experimental electronica, free improv, pop and goodness knows what else. Peter Hollo

Butch Cassidy Sound System

Butches Brew In amongst all the Soul Jazz and (Fenetik/Stomp) Blood & Fire reggae reissues there is this excellent, albeit very short, album from young UK producer Michael Hunter, Drawing heavily on '70s roots, the Butch Cassidy Sound System is a warm, soulful dedication to roots reggae. Unlike a lot of other roots-sampling digidub, such as Groove Corporation and Rockers HiFi, Butch Cassidy doesn't just sample roots vocals and lay

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them over modern electronic backing, instead he attempts to create period-piece tracks in which his samples no longer stand out so clearly. Thus the most well-known track on this release, his cover of The Meters' soul classic 'Cissy Strut', is refashioned as a dubbed out hiphop track, whilst 'The Putney' and 'Outsider' are perfect late '70s roots dub smothered in siren delays. Only the opener Brothers & Sisters' gives away its modern origins – being an uptempo piece of rollicking UK dub house that wouldn't be out of place at a Jah Shaka clash. Sebastian Chan $\mathit{Chronomad}$

Sokut

 $(Alien\ Resistor)$

While the idea of modernising world music with contemporary electronics and rhythms sounds promising in theory, in Practice the resultant fusion can sound more like vulgar kitsch than a novel genre-defining hybrid. Saam Schlamminger (aka Chronomad) treads somewhat risky ground when he merges musical sounds and styles of the Middle East with the drums, keyboards, and programming of Markus and Micha Acher (of The Notwist, Tied & Tickled Trio, Lali Puna, and Ms. John Soda fame). Born in Iran and Munich-based since the age of twelve, Schlamminger is no dilettante; formally trained he plays the Persian zarb (a cylinder-shaped drum) and daf (a tambourine with rings in place of cymbals), as well as canjira (bells), dohol (a large two-headed drum played with sticks), gambe, guitar, and bass. Not surprisingly, Sokut is most successful when electronics are used to convincingly re-create Eastern patterns and textures rather than conventional techno beats, and when electronics and 'live' elements are allowed to interact: voices and instruments are cut up and transformed into stuttering themes or configured into arresting rhythmic patterns. Strangely, the album's muted teal-maroon, photo-montage cover design evokes Cold War-era Russian Constructivism, just one of the album's many unusual qualities. Much like forebears Trilok Gurtu, Glen Velez, Rabih Abou-Khalil, and Alice Coltrane, Schlamminger and the Achers create a convincing global fusion in Sokut by thoroughly integrating the component pieces of Eastern and Western styles as opposed to superficially grafting one onto the other. In this case,

C.M. Von Hausswolff Three Overpopulated Cities... (Sub Rosa/Creative Vibes) Aside from winning the award for the most long winded, descriptive and judgemental title of this issue (full title: Three Overpopulated Cities Built By Short

And An Abandoned Church), Swedish composer Carl Unbalanced And Quite Dangerous Airport Michael Von Hausswolf has crafted an incredibly abstract album inspired by his travels to Mexico City, Tokyo, and Bangkok. As suggested by the title this isn't exactly a Woody Allen style love letter to these cities – rather the pieces included here are his responses to over-population, poor planning and the disparity amongst the people he found there. Whilst it's not clear how these sounds were created or constructed, it is clear that without the helpful titles it would be impossible to link these pieces to the aforementioned cities. Rather than an aggressive, abrasive response, Von Hausswolff creates deep bass drones and tones that slowly build and reverberate over these eight-minute-plus pieces – with the occasional searing blast of digitalia. The kicker is the second cut recorded in Stockholm for galleries in New York and Seattle, Muhammad Murtala Or So... which for its twenty-three-minute lifespan consists of a huge bass heavy droneand a sparse repetitive beat that sounds like a robot being beaten and skittering digital static. A weird and obtuse work. Bob Baker Fish

$D_{epeche\ Mode}$

Remixes 81-04 (Mute)

I think I probably first heard Depeche Mode when I was in Year 6, everyone on the school bus was singing Teople Are People'. DM never really attained the art-cool of their closest compatriots, New Order, and instead get lumped in with other '80s refugees, Duran Duran, Hamstrung by earnest corny lyrics (but who wasn't in the '80s?) it was their late '80s output on their Music For The Masses (1987) and Violator (1990) albums that has stood the test of time, with pretty much everything subsequent being rubbish. Interestingly, the zeitgeist has caught up with them again the very time that this pack of remixes is out, Marilyn Manson is covering 'Personal Jesus' and a car advert is using Just Can't Get Enough'. From very early on, Depeche Mode worked with remixers and they had a bit of knack for securing mixes from 'soon-to-be' stars rather than the obligatory big names. One example of this is the Portishead remix of Walking In My Shoes' that preceded their rise to fame, and curiously omitted from this collection replaced by their mix of 'In Your Room' one year later. Spread across a triple CD set, there is a bit of everything on this set of remixes - from cheesy synth Pop and reasonably generic '80s club mixes, to nuggets of goodness such as DJ Shadow's mix of 'Painkiller', Kruder & Dorfmeister's Predicatble but effective dub of 'Useless', the pre-Tackhead industrial funk of Adrian Sherwood's mix of 'Master & Servant', Speedy J's brutalist version of 'It's No Good' and Colder's lumbering and lurching remake of 'Clean'. But despite over three hours of remixes there is not enough here to excite, and even at that length it cannot claim to be the comprehensive remix collection it could have been. Sebastian Chan

Dizzee Rascal Showtime

(XL)

The Mercury Music Award can be a kiss of death for UK musicians, as past winners crash back to earth with tepid follow-ups consigned to the discount bin. Listening to Showtime makes me think that Dizzee Rascal has parlayed his

 $meteoric\ rise\ into\ some$ significant character development. The difficult second album from the difficult garage poster boy has Dizzee Rascal diluting the unconventional sonics and thrilling novelty of his first album, replacing it with an increased focus on progression and lyrical evolution. This isn't what the music journalists and IDM labels are calling grime, it isn't the surreal rhythms and obtuse bass lines of anonymous white labels, raves and pirate radio, It's the reverse impression of UK hiphop viewed through a UK breakbeat garage/grime/Eski-beat mirror of dysfunctional dance music, and moderated through the global hegemony of the rap music image machine and mega-culture, Dizzee Rascal isn't a neurotic engineer or self-taught producer chained to a laptop and keyboard, he is the aspirational MC who 'could be overseas... could be live in Wembley warming up for Jay Z. He has the bomb video clips with crazy lighting and edits. Unlike the US culture it apes it's not the total subjugation of style over substance, in a typically English manner Dizzee Rascal maintains copious amounts of idiosyncratic charm and eccentric beats and rhymes, Showtime's production is broader in scope than the debut, with a few subtle licks taken from UK garage Prehistory: doubletime beakbeat hardcore, monsterous techstep bass lines and filter sweeps. Dizzee Rascal has so far managed to infect mass culture with a handful of radical beats, rhymes and rhythms, and this second album continues that legacy. Vaughan Healey Efterklang

Tripper(Leaf/Inertia)

Efterklang, whose name means reverberation, is a sizeable ten piece from Copenhagen who combine the sound of Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Sigur Ros and Mum to create and album that at times surpasses the latest efforts of all three of these influences. Their debut album for Leaf, Tripper, is a quite stunning example of atmospheric orchestrapper, is a quite stating example of authospheric occurs tral postrock underlaid with laptop electronics and obscured vocals. With lush string contributions from Icelandic string quartet Amina (who worked with Sigur Rós) the album's best moments are early on. The second track, 'Swarming', is all music box pianos and sweet vocals with glitched electronic pulses as a rhythm whilst 'Collecting Shields' is full of flittering twitchy electronic insects. A fascinating debut. Sebastian Chan

 $Global\ Goon$

Family Glue

 $(Audiod_{regs})$

Apparently Johnny Hawk (aka Global Goon) roomed with Richard D. James in London in the mid-90s before releasing his 1996 Rephlex debut Goon, which was followed by Gradle of History and then Vatican Nitez. The Aphex Twin influence is still audible on Family Glue, his fourth album, but that's not a complaint. Think of Hawk as a less jaded Aphex, someone for whom the innocent joy of music-making is still very much alive, a quality largetheir other redeeming qualities. Goon is also more straightforward and less self-indulgent than Aphex, as all eleven tracks on this succinct set make their point with dispatch and end before the four-minute mark. With only one exception (the spacey yet unremarkable 'Pause'), all songs are up-tempo; anyone looking for somber melancholia won't find it on Family Glue. A typical Goon track features a propulsive bass and drums combination over which bright synth melodies sing and subtle vocal flavourings appear, and he often incorporates a bucolic synth sound that'll be familiar to Boards of Canada listeners. Electrostatic Bonj De Lonj' opens the set on a high note with its bright analog synths, beefy bass lines, and laconic but assured drum beats, and the good times continue with 'Who Gonched Ya?' Here an intricate, Plaid-style beat kicks the track into gear riere an increase, riant-style near known the trank line gear accompanied by slithering lead bass lines; Goon even finds a spot for the by-now familiar 'funky drummer' beat in 'Glory Por rot the by-now laminal lunky uruniner near in Giory B. Admittedly, Goon's pop-IDM-disco-funk hybrid lacks the moments of brilliance and depth that distinguish the best Aphex tracks, but Hawk makes up for it by distilling the Appea uacas, our nava makes up not newly mount of irreverent spirit of Wagon Christ and James's analog sparkle into a jubilant cocktail. Ron Schepper

Warp Records are a different beast of late, what with the Gravenhurst Flashlight Sessions likes of !!!, Vincent Gallo and a generally expanding roster and a generary expanding ruster that refreshingly contradicts its back catalogue. Nick Talbot's (Warp/Inertia) Gravenhurst furthers this abandoning of Warp's electronic past, focusing purely on traditional songwriting using voice and acoustic instrumentation. There is some heavy emulaand acousing managements and melancholy, but it tion here of Drakian wistfulness and melancholy, but it seems a little too forced and strained in execution. Nick Drake perfected the art of shaping sad songs that were also full of hope and promise, and didn't choose to wallow to the point of self-indulgent no return. Talbot has a voice that point or some management in a point in a route in a well written sometimes shines with the aural crutches of a well written and structured song, but more often than not he falls a little flat in delivery on Flashlight Seasons. His harmony work nat in nervery on Flushingh Deusons, rus narmony work seems rushed and unfocused, possibly a result of recording the entire album in the confines of his own home studio with no real external influence. Floor, 'The Diver', and 'East of the City' (itself being and dark

turally beyond densely, finely-tuned atmospherics. Perhaps short of developing melodically and struclyrical flair, yet somehow fall this is the most appropriate criticism of the entire album, with songs often relying heavily on a mesh of multitracked parts that drench the arrangements unnecessarily. The Ice Tree' melds all the promise of the remainder of the album, and shows that Talbot's Gravenhurst has the potential to grow into something that is obviously only half told here.

Barry Handler

Arve Henriksen Trumpeter Arve Henriksen hails from Norway but there's certainly nothing regional about the global style of this fan-Chiaroscuro tastic collection. Evidence of his interest in Balinese sounds (Rune Grammofon) and Mongolian overtone singing occasionally surfaces, but traces of African music, classical minimalism and jazz emerge too. Henriksen's breathy, blurred tone calls to mind Jon Hassell and the boldly expressive smears suggest Lester Bowie, but musically, Henriksen pursues a 'world' style that's uniquely his own. 'Opening Image' plunges us immediately into a poignant string-laden soundscape with Henriksen's trumpet crying softly, its soft tones even resembling a flute. His voice enters, so high-pitched it resembles a choirboy's. It's a remarkably beautiful opening that is reprised at the album's end as an equally moving, almost heartbreaking, coda. The exotic percussion of 'Bird's-Eye View' then transports us to Africa, with Henriksen's singing trumpet featured against the afro-jazz backing. Later in the album he retires the horn to spotlight his voice, heard in 'Chiaro' against a backdrop of percussion and electronic Washes, and then in a more incantatory feel in the plodding, washes, and then in a more incamently reel in the product, dirge-like Blue Silk' where Kleive works up an animated, colourful base alongside a murmuring array of trumpets. While not obviously 'jazz' in the conventional sense, this marvelous album testifies that the spirit of exploration pursued by the Art Ensemble of Chicago lives, something needed now more than ever in light of Lester Bowie's premature passing. How ironic that the album's title refers to the techpassing. They have that the aroun's the teles to the text. two-dimensional imagery, as there's nothing illusory about two-unnensional imagery, as there's nothing musory about the deeply affecting qualities of Chiaroscuro. Ron Schepper

Hard Sleeper

For someone with such an acclaimed background in design "Rain"/A Leaf Spiral and typography, Dublin-based Peter Maybury's latest Hard anu typography, Dubin-basou i oto mayomy o more indis-Sleeper release "Rain"/A Leaf Spiral boasts a rather undistinguished, even crude cover design. Luckily the minimal electronic music inside is the diametric opposite. "Rain"/A Leaf Spiral exudes a clean and clinical sheen and, in spite of its sonic tactility, is meditative, unhurried, and quiet. At twenty-three minutes 'Rain' is the obvious epic, although that's attributable more to duration than dynamics. It might seem somewhat loosely structured, but in fact Maybury care fully modulates its development throughout. He places a wavering tone in the background that forms a connecting thread for the numerous episodes, and frames the piece with an elegant piano intro that returns as a closing refrain to bring the piece to a gentle resolution. A rich arsenal of digital noise — what Maybury calls 'the detritus of pop' — appears, but the various surges and buzzes emerge restrained to not disrupt the track's serene surface. Using digitally manipulated sounds of piano, percussion, synthesizers, and guitars, the titular piece impresses as a dreamy travelogue. He splits 'A Leaf Spiral' into four sections of which the middle two notably stand out. In part two, he cleverly uses drop-outs from a cloud in pair (wo, no neverty uses map out in the of hiss to generate a subtle funk pattern, and in the third section, deftly constructs an extremely minimal piece using tears, clicks, burbles, and bleeps. All things considered, it's an engaging enough release that tends toward the derivative, but is saved by the intelligence and imagination Maybury brings to the material. Ron Schepper

Himuro

Clear Without Items The music of Yoshiteru Himuro is all over the shop, yet it's also remarkably controlled and (Couchblip) extraordinarily precise in its eccentricity. Whilst with the advent of computer music some artists attempt to cram in as many genres as humanly possible into the one Song, Himuro by contrast appears incredibly clear and focussed about what each track requires before moving on to the next. Consequently Clear Without

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across incredibly diverse terrain both in terms of style and moods, somewhat like a peculiar electronic opera. The palette and inspiration comes from '80s game sound, where Himuro has trawled the insides of decrepit Ataris and Nintendos and wrenched out those ancient kitsch sounds, and reorientated them with a distinctly 21st century feel. It's tightly controlled mechanical music comprised of claustrophobic electronics, demented disco induced stomps, twisted abrasive bursts of hiphop, lopsided hackneyed drum'n bass, and weird genreless pieces that manage to exist outside explanation, yet still make perfect sense in Himuro's magical world. Here Donkey Kong has been turned on his head and become a dark, ambient, somewhat melancholic slice of atmospheric electro, Pac-Man a Tourette's inspired burst of impish jungle, and Galaxian a downtempo slab of electro trip hop. Clear Without Hems is undoubtedly a colourful and evocative disc with a light and playful mood contrasted by some dark mysterious places, and it's the emotion he conjures up as he navigates this divide that provides that lasting rewards of this surprising and inspired work. Bob Baker

K_{azuya} Ishigami

Utiage Hanabi

 $(Ch_{mafu\ Nocords})$

The swathe of CDs from Austrian label Chmafu Nocords comes with a rather overbearing set of A4 notes from the label, and it actually takes a few days after reading the post-Deleuzian claptrap ('a non-profit label that specializes in anti-specialization. Specialization is in fact only a fancy form of slavery'; Virtuosity? Fuck it! It is the worst enemy of the earl' and so on) to properly appreciate the music for itself. And Kazuya Ishigami's album features soundscaping of a kind that works very well indeed with no explanatory notes at all. Distorted noise and drones are put into a 3D space that makes them sound like field recordings from some kind of metallic source, so when spoken voices are heard, it's like we're hearing a recording of some kind of installation. It's abstract noise, but works as a weird journey, and the blocks of wood in the second track are particularly engaging. Peter Hollo

Little Songs About Raindrops (Plop/Couchblip)

With Little Songs About Raindrops, Shawn James Seymour (Lullatone) shifts the focus away from the pure sine tones of last year's Computer Recital to a more expansive toy orchestra sound. Stylistically, his music retains its previous child-like, innocent qualities but now sounds even prettier. As before, the songs are charming moodscapes that cumulatively induce a peaceful reverie; there's no conventional rhythmic base to speak of, the clos-

repeats throughout 'Leaves Falling' like raindrop Patter. Obviously one presumes that his recent move to Nagoya, Japan, catalyzed the stylistic changes; the music is now statelier and less minimal than before, as Seymour is now statemen and tess minimal main between as Seymout is joined by singer Yoshimi Tomida on four songs, plus guitar and ukulele players on others, Adding to its charm is its occasional homemade feel, with brief music box tracks like 'My Petit Prelude' and 'Pitter Patter Interlude' sounding like they were recorded in Seymour's bedroom. Those are slight pieces, however — mere fragments compared to longer and more intricate songs like 'Morning Coffee' where glockenspiels and gamelan chimes interweave with growing intensity. Amidst string plucks, a melodica sound adds a nostalgic air to the song's meditative mood as it does to other songs. Admittedly, a sameness in the sound and style starts to emerge by the midway point of the recording—most tracks develop from intricate interweaves of melodic patterns—but there's no denying the lovely marriage of lapping ukulele strums and looping glockenspiel melodies in 'Leaves Falling' or the appealing onomatopoeic qualities of 'Drip Drops Jumping On An Umbrella where guitar plucks mimic bounc- $L_{ionel\ Marchetti}$

L'Incandescence de L'Etoile (Stichting)

This single, at times ferocious, twenty-minute piece from renowned French collagist and composer Lionel Marchetti is full of snarling, roaring, screeching tones that dip into light squeaks before coming together in a roaring cacophony of aggressive voices, Seemingly placing a heavy reliance on tape manipulation to contribute to the drama of the piece, Marchetti alternates between violent strokes that increase in volume, range and density during the frequent crescendos, and then dissipate into the odd fragmented snarl or droning Zen like ghostly cries. It would be interesting to know the sources from which Marchetti; a devotee of the school of music concrète garnered his sounds. Whilst there appears to be the sounds of flies, tapes of birds run backwards and possibly some larger more aggressive animals with bigger teeth, the genius is in the manipulation, which twists, speeds up or fragments these core sounds altering them into what could almost be (but isn't) laptop-crafted digital refuse. Bob Baker

Moodymann

. Black Mahogani

(Peacefrog/Creative Vibes)

I know it's been out for a while now, but I finally got a copy a little while ago, and this is strictly timeless stuff. Since 1997, Kenny Dixon Jr has been taking the roots of house music – the glorious moments, the moody bass lines and warm vibes – to create his soulful electronic music. His fifth full-length album Black Mahogani is arguably the best yet. It's set somewhere in between a dark, smoky jazz club and a beautiful deep house mix. Whispers from the vocalists appear in the mix, dip down again only to reemerge minutes later, repetitive minimal loops and disembodied gospel singers. Disco loops are cropped into tracks, alongside snatches of Norma Jean Bell or Amp Fiddler. Black Mahogani is like that all the way though. There's scene setting ambience and the signature samples (from Blaxploitation films like Superfly)

that earned Dixon his undergound rep for talking about racism in America. It's almost a cliché to label Kenny Dixon Jr a genius, Yes, he's a house music producer, but comparing this to most house releases is like comparing a caramelised peach to a jam doughnut. Calico

$Mouse\ On\ Mars$

Radical Connector

 $(R_{ogue} R_{crds/Inertia})$

Since reportedly meeting at a death metal concert, Jan St. Werner and Andi Toma have been producing together under their Mouse On Mars moniker for just on a decade. The slow but steady trickle of releases issuing from their studio reveal a couple of restless musicians always ready to explore and experiment with new ideas. This is primarily why there has always been a buzz of excitement surrounding the release of their albums. Surprisingly, Radical Connector shifts away from the jagged edges of electronic experimentation found on their last album Idiology and favours an idiosyncratic pop approach. It has been a long time since Mouse on Mars have been this melodic and, somewhat uncharacteristically, there are vocals on every track, while the beats stomp towards danceability. Radical Connector showcases the duo at their most accessible, as they playfully deconstruct urban, hiphop, funk and pop influences into jittery computerised mayhem that isn't too dissimilar to the vibe found on Funkstörung's Disconnected album released earlier this year. Mine Is In Yours' kicks off the album and it bumps to a funky grinding beat accompanied by Dodo Nkishi's Vocals, which are processed and layered with out-of-control synths to work up to a throbbing climax which acquiesces into lush, pastoral vocal harmonies accompanied by a strumming acoustic guitar. The first single, Wipe That Sound' features an irresistible, lumbering, bass-heavy groove with falsetto disco backing vocals. 'Send Me Shivers' comes draped in delicate electronic textures underscored by a bouncy tech-house beat, while the duo dissect Niobe's sweet voice in a computer with a battery of effects to achieve a strange stuttering robotic effect that avoids the vocodered cliches found on so many electro tracks. The furiously shredded vocals on Spaceship'deliver a political message while the track sinks deep into glitchy booty shaking laptop p-funk. Foreboding electronics and guitars swirl hypnotically on 'The End' while Niobe mysteriously suggests that the end, the very end, is on hand. This album demonstrates how lessons learned from years of sonic experimentation, sweetened with melodic hooks, can be inserted into a pop context. Predictably the results are quirky but very appealing. Guido Farnell

$Multiple_X$

With Hands And Feet Remixes

 $(Multiplex\ Music)$

Multiplex are a brotherly duo that have released in the past on Toytronic and Senton, and now present their own label, Multiplex Music. The CD begins with the original rendition of 'With H_{ands}

melodic electronica, and it is followed by ten consecutive remixes, provided by a choice of illustrious artists: Proem, Novel 23, Dictaphone, Digitonal, Shitmat, Safety Scissors, Fizzarum, Decadnids. Though the remix album is not a new idea, provided you have a great song to begin with, the result is always interestingly diverse and it highlights each artist's individual sound as they each interpret the same piece of music in a different way. Digitonal starts off the remixing work with a lush orchestral-inspired piece that is captivating. The tranquility is irreverently removed by the frantic and sinister splattercore of Shitmat, who also offers up another piece of mayhem later in the CD. We are returned to the safety of the serene melodic ground with the lovely remixes by Proem, Decadnids and Fizzarum. Safety Scissors roughens up the original with a quirky SID-styled interpretation and crunchy 8-bit beats. The stand out remix is by Novel 23 who takes the oriental inspiration one step further and the result is a an uplifting yet dark piece. The touches of live instrumentation and filtering by Dictaphone puts the finishing touches on this extermely captivating

release. Melinda Taylor

Murcof is the Tijuana-based producer Fernando Corona, who Murcof has previously released material as Terreste, as well as other material that adopts much the same principles of his more Utopia recent style of composition (i.e. orchestral cut ups, micro rhythm edits and generally nano-textures and rhythms). Essentially a remix album all prettied up, Utopia features remixes from a handful of respected producers in the Leaf camp and extended family, with an additional four original Murcof tracks (two already featured on the Ulysses 12" released previously in 2003). 'Ulysses' introduces Utopia with soaring and sensual pure filmic dissonance and a melancholic saunter that is hard to resist, the swathe of melodic elements subside as the click-house elements arrive proper. 'Una' and 'Ultimatum' again utilize this formula of composition, but somehow don't fare so well – both stumble (yet in startlingly beautiful and subtle fashion) a little in their delivery. Jan Jelinek's interpretation of 'Maiz' plods along pleasantly with a barrage of micro sounds that creep around a soft piano motif, but the full potential of this arrangement of sounds never seems to be realised. The Deathprod mix of 'Ulysses' is a delightfully brief excursion in dream-like texture and is ironically more engaging than the rhythm based remixes present elsewhere on the disc. Pleasingly, the disc ends on a high note with Sutekh's remix of 'Memoria' foregoing cut and paste build up techniques and jumping straight into the smooth edged electro groove he does so damn well. Barry Handler

After Ninja Tune closed down its electronic/ambient sub-Neotropic sidiary Ntone, Neotropic's Riz Maslen was cast adrift. In White Rabbits 2002 she toured Australia showcasing some of her rediscov-(Mush/Stomp)

with the Anticon crew that she has ended up at LA-based ered interest in guitar. It was through touring the USA and hooking up Mush Records for her fourth LP. The new album, White Rabbits, continues Riz's foray into ambient guitar-meets-elec tronics that started on her La Prochaine Fois release for Ntone in 2001. In terms of ambient electronics it is all very laid back and calmative, like a bubbling brook, and far less foregrounded than compatriots like Fourtet. The main complaint is that it floats past too easily. Nevertheless, there are Plant 15 that it month past too easily, nevertheless, mere are plenty of good things going for this album - Feeling Remote with its mouth organ, is like vintage early '90s Orb, and the drifting nature of the opener, 'Girls At The Seaside' is a delight. Sebastian Chan

Jupiter Sajitarius is the third album from US-born Canadian Noah23 Jupiter Sajitarius resident MC Noah23, and comes out on Hamburg label 2nd Rec - that continues its diverse output with this foray into (2nd Rec) indie hiphop. Noah23 isn't your average MC; while shifting from rapid fire rhymes to semi-singing, he's more likely to drop names like 23 Skidoo, Joy Division or Axl Rose than he is to follow hiphop's more standard rhetoric. Similarly, is to tomow improops more standard therefore. Similarly, having come from a production background that has encompassed rock and techno, his musical backings range from boom bap to reggae skanks to odd swingtime samples. The first thing to strike me about this generally interesting record is its similarity to Australia's very own The Herd – the production, rhyming styles, and Noah23's flows and politics immediately conjure up images of Ozi Batla and Urthboy minieuratery conjune up minages of O. Daua and Ormboy perhaps crossed with MC Paul Barman (although without the stupidity). Likewise, fans of other Canadian MCs like Josh Martinez and of course, our own Elefant Traks should check this. For those insistent on keeping it real (a.k.a. keeping it locked down) – bypass this one. Sebastian Chan

O.Blaat

Two Novels: Gaze/In The Cochlea When Keiko Uenishi came to visit us here in Australia as part of the What Is Music? festival in 2002, she delivered some amazingly intricate sets of processed electronics. Her some amazing, marant out or processed accounts. A sensibilities, facilitated through the use of the LLOOPP MAX/MSP software generated a gentle but directed sound excursion that engages with its listener in a strange hypnotic fashion. On 'Two Novels' she takes us through a tour of the projects and collaborations that have dotted her music creation over the past few years. Based in Brooklyn, Keiko calls in collaborators such as Toshio Kajiwara + DJ Olive (both organisers of the Phonomena series at SubTonic), Kaffe Matthews, Ikue Mori and others. These collaborations reveal the qualities of O.Blaat's work with a enlightening truthfulness. Attentive to the smallest of sounds, her knowledge and ness. Auenuve to the smallest of sounds, her knowledge and comfort-level using LLOOPP produces a fluid and suggestive production aesthetics captured well on pieces like Production assured to printed work on process Aki Onda)
'Afternoon' (which features contributions from Aki Onda) and 'Nightfall'. As each of these audio-novellas play out, you're left hungry for a repeated session, curious to see if more boils away just below the volume level of your previous listen. It's been a while coming, but the wait seems well

worth it! Lawrence English

Mark Nelson's fourth album as Pan American sees a return to pan American the gentle arpeggiated aesthetics of A Stable Reference-era Quiet City Labradford in favour of the bass pulse that defined his last album. This move backwards, far from being a negative impulse, has consolidated the unique presence that both Labradford and Pan American possess, but it also blurs the line between them. Although the Pole-ish scratch and thunder of his last work The River Made No Sound was moder ately convincing in its scope, it lacked the rich timbres and phrasing of the previous outings. Quiet City, on the other hand, is all cold stillness and subtle energy - and forgoes programmed beats altogether – a characteristic more in tune with Labradford's output than the typically beat driven solo project. Although a little confusing in this melding of project. ects, the eight tracks on Quiet City pass like gentle showers of rain, rarely registering more than the sound of tyres on wet bitumen and the gradual glistening of the grass. It's an album for dark nights and the occasional blister ing afternoon as it indulges in a almost palpable indolence: the barely audible rasped poem over the rever berating picked guitar of the first track ('Before') is the single greatest outpouring of energy until a set of lazy trap drums appear on track five ('Lights on Wire'). In between are tracks exploring single note drones, dusty vinyl crackles and a sparsely melancholic melodica. Despite its quiet nature (and in fact because of it) the thrill of vertigo is present at every moment, as each piece verges on the sublime point between musical existence and the

precipice of silence. DH Pan Sonic

Kesto 234.48:4

Kesto is enormous, feeling like it encompasses every area ever touched upon by this (Mute) experimental electronic lo fi duo, and then some. A four-disc box set Jovingly packaged with vivid photography, Kesto, roughly translated into English apparently refers to strength and duration. The duration is part of the title, over 234 minutes of varied, eclectic and at times quite frighten ing approaches to sound, and the strength comes from the inherent violence and power of these sounds and the means by which they are integraled into structures. Their third long player, coming three years after the accomplished minimalistic beats and breaths of Aaltopiiri, Kesto's scope is unparalleled, yet never becomes indulgent. Beginning on disc one with a savage burst of noise it quickly erupts into molten lead industrial Techno Animal-esque beats and remains for the majority violently heavy, at times searing,

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aggressive and overwrought instrumental hiphop. Disc two, meanwhile, returns to a similar atmospheric beat driven world of Aaltopiiri with brooding muscular wisps of sound taking a step back from the heavily treated rhythms. The third disc is perhaps the most interesting, though also the most abstract - where beats are dispensed with altogether and replaced with dark ambient drones, gentle tones and menacing at times violent clutches of atmosphere. It's a dark, jitery, though at times quite powerful, work of alien soundscapes that isn't afraid to be provocative. The last disc, a single hour-long piece entitled 'Radiation' is almost Zen-like with a metallic shimmering drone and is an interesting Counterpoint to the aggression of the first disc. Though the sounds have been harnessed in a quite mesmerising and peaceful form, there is no denying the underlying strength and violence inherent in the work. 234 minutes and barely a moment is wasted. Bob Baker Fish $Q_{uantazelle}$

Coaster(subVariant)

Chicago-based Liz McLean Knight certainly keeps herself busy. As well as making electronic music, she runs a design company, an online DM magazine and various other ventures centred around technology's interface with culture. Her new album is released on her own label subVariant, and with a healthy list of other artists, it's certainly no vanity label. Music seems to be her first love, however, and it comes out in the high-quality electronic music on this CD. The design conceit is that Coaster doubles as exactly that - something to rest your beverage on, complete with customizable colourful CD covers. But don't let that fool you into expecting disposable music; Quantazelle's music is as melodic as it is expertly programmed, the complex beats flowing with grace. Disarmingly, a footnote on the artwork tells us a 'Hidden track is sold separately', so it's actually a shame that it appears after minutes of silence inside the last track – it's a beautiful creation of multi-tracked vocal samples and beats that deserves to be 'tracked separately'. It's great to find another female electronic artist out there, as enterprising and accomplished as Sydney's own Robokoneko. Peter Hollo Reverbaphon

Our Heart Beats with Joy (The Curved World

Benbecula Records began as a Scottish CDR label in the late '90s. Reverbaphon is the 26th release on the label to date. At first listen Reverbaphon is reminiscent of Morr Music, but a prolonged investigation reveals a gamut of styles, from sound experiments, to ambience, to some folktronica incarnations with digital diver-

sions. A dark and reflective ambience envelops certain tracks, and they're contrasted with some more upbeat and Peculiar vocal offerings. When I hear yet another electronic release drawing inspiration from folk music my ears get very weary – but one of the things that make this release stand out above the rest is the range of instruments present; from accordian, melodica, guitar, banjo, biwa and of course, a reverbaphone (a reed mouth piece connected to a long cardboard tube with a spring-tension along the length that is recorded to a variable speed four-track, altering the pitch during recording to get a tune). An atypical take on electronica and distinctly lovely to listen to. Melinda Taylor $L_{ori} S_{cacco}$

 C_{ircles}

 $(Eastern\ Developments)$

At first glance, the nature photography and '60s-styled typography that adom Circles suggest that it might be some earnest collection from a Californian singer-songwriter in the Laura Nyro or Joni Mitchell mould, but first impressions, as they so commonly do, mislead. It's an instrumental album from classically-trained pianist Lori Scacco, one-time cofounder of indie group Seely and lately a touring member of Savath & Savalas; coincidentally, Circles finds its home on Scott Herren's Eastern Developments label, Its nine tracks are generally becalmed, meditative, and bucolic. Her music is often stately and ruminative, qualities nicely showcased in the opener 'Reeling Then Again' where her overdubbed guitars and pianos (acoustic and electric in both cases) are enhanced by the warm tones of Tim Delaney's acoustic bass. Scacco's an impressive instrumentalist, too, as she adds per-Cussion and bowed strings to the dramatic piano flourishes and guitars of 'Imitation of Happiness,' Elsewhere, she restrainedly performs 'Love's Journey' as a reflective and ruminative piano solo. A few tracks emphasize a different, more electronic side. On 'A Quiet Light,' electric pianos create a child-like, lullaby sound that recalls Lullatone, while 'Meditation' moves even further into ambient electronica with its blurred electric pianos and clicking patterns. The resultant album isn't earth-shattering by any means, but still music refreshingly free of irony, cynicism, and sentiment — no small accomplishment. Ron Schepper Secret Chiefs 3

 $Book\ of\ Horizons$

(Mimicry/ Stomp)

With Book of Horizons Trey Spruance, the former Mr Bungle member and sole musical mind behind the Secret Chiefs 3 has crafted his masterwork. A sprawling canvas of Middle Eastern melodies colliding alternatively with film soundtrack influenced sounds, dirty electronics, punk rock and surf guitar, Book of Horizons is the Culmination of years of tireless work and the first part of a plan so grand that the Secret Chiefs 3 could conceivably take

over the world. Split into six separate sub bands, all with separate names and comprising of the likes of Danny Heifetz (Mr Bungle), Timb Harris (Estradasphere), William Winnant (Sonic Youth/Mr Bungle), and renowned improviser Eyvind Kang, the cuts on Book of Horizons are a series of themes for each band, or variations on these themes. The first part in a trilogy, not all of the themes will be revealed until the third part is concluded. Though it may

bizarre theory, which anyone who's read the sleeve notes to the three previous studio records can attest is pretty damn dense, the music itself, spawned by these ideas, is light, weightless and damn near perfect. If you're sick of disposable music, Book of Horizons is the antidote, aside from the theoretical basis, the music itself positively resonates with feeling, in much the same way the work of Alice Coltrane is imbued with intense spirituality. It's ironic that an American playing Middle Eastern music is able to achieve this, but what's clear is that a week, a year, ten years from now this music is still going to mean something. The musicianship is extraordinary, the compositions challenging. vital and as uncompromisingly diverse as any of the Bungle material. Featuring what sounds like everything from Morriconi-esque symphonic sweeps to Turkish wedding music, to minimal avant-garde soundscapes, to bizarre Arabic percussion disco electronic amalgam, this is music that is so classy and distincly in its own world, that everything else in yours suddenly ceases to be important. Bob Baker Fish R_{an} Sl_{avin}

 $P_{roduct \ 02}$

 (C_{ronica})

Ran Slavin is an audio/video composer and improviser who has previously operated under diverse monikers such as Tonr, Extract, Iran and Rose of Jericho, working with various noise outfits in Israel and London from the late '80s to early '90s. These days his musical work is purely within the abstract electronic realm, utilising flecks of static and warm metallic drones to come across with the treated lushness and depth of Austrian maestro Christian Fennesz. The initial nine cuts under the umbrella Tropical Agent are quite amazing constructions, gorgeous minimal drone pieces, warm low key pulses that resemble beats, skittery delayed electronics and a craftsman-like use of dynamics. Allowing for thirty seconds dead air in between, on 'Vista Plain', the opening track of the second part entitled Ears in Water. Slavin incorporates the gentle strumming of guitar, a pulsating drone and some gently tearing digital static to hypnotic effect. Whilst the remainder of the disc continues deep within the experimental realm of the first, it is actually stranger, somewhat more abstract, with peculiar muttering over far away drones, and sounds that seem to begin from miles away before slowly evolving into focus. Bob Baker Fish

Spirit Elevating Brains

Do Not Expect

 $(Ch_{mafu} \stackrel{\cdot}{N_{ocords}})$

Packaged in a DVD case comes this double CD release from Sebastian Alvarez (aka S.E.B) on Austria's Chmafu Nocords. The second CD, a self-contained EP called Evidence and Process, offers fairly uninspiring minimal loopy electronics. On the album proper, however, there's more to keep one listening. Tracks often loop in ways reminiscent of early releases on fellow Austrian label Mego, and this can give the impression that we're just listening to a series of ideas strung out to track-length with no real development. Still,

tracks have a quirkiness that throws you just in time to keep the finger off the skip button, and there's an ear for sonic texture that bodes very well for future releases by S.E.B. Peter Hollo

When Funkstörung released Disconnected, the group Loops From The Bergerie traded its unique sound for faceless soul, pop, rock, and rap. I wondered, then, whether Swayzak might suffer a similar fate given that the group had decided to emphasize analogue equipment from the '70s and early '80s over laptop production methods, and embrace, more than ever before, a live analogue approach. Any fear of this are laid to rest once Keep It Coming kicks in. In this irresistible opener, the group alternates garbled voice clusters ('Are you ready to go?' and T'm ready to go') with Brun's dark monotone while a pummeling base that's equal parts electro, technne wame a parametarg nase mat s equal parts electro, technology, and new wave broils underneath. Following its 'Psycho Killer' intro, Brun re-appears to pleadingly croon on the lurching shuffle 'Snowblind', but the remaining vocal tracks are shared by Clair Dietrich, Mathilde Mallen, and Richard Davis. There are instrumentals too, like 'Jeune Loup,' where the group drapes Fripp-like razor guitars over a clicking groove that shimmies and shakes like some animatronic belly dancer. The album's integrated feel is partially attributable to its method of production. Rather than soliciting vocal contributions via e-mail as was done in the past, Swayzak invited the singers to the Bergerie so that the songs and the vocals developed together. Consequently, the pieces seem fully-formed and natural as opposed to sounding like backing tracks that have had vocals grafted onto them. Consider how artfully, for example, the group combines minimal bass lines, electro showers, and warm synth tones into a restrained base for Clair Dietrich's sprechgesang vocal in Then There's Her.' Make no mistake: these are songs, not experimental soundscapes, but eminently sophisticated and finely crafted songs nonetheless. On Loops From The Bergerie, Swayzak distills its strengths into a stylistic format that seems thoroughly tailor-made for them. Ron Schepper

Peter Szely

Viennese artist Peter Szely has been working across a range $\underset{\text{Welcome To My World}}{\sum}$ of sound fields for many years. Working as a sound architect, exploring the use of sound through a variety of installation and theatre related projects, he recently turned his interest in sound to focus more fully on composition and it is this album that is the results of that work. Collecting together a anum mac is the results of that work. Confecting together a range of sound sources, from electric guitar and programmed drums to filtered percussion and field recordings, Szely creates a personal and in some ways quite simple sound world. dies a personal and in some ways quite simple sound wome.

He never tries to reach for anything too unfamiliar here – the melodies and drum patterns, while occasionally unusual, generally suggest a passion for traditional pop structures. For this reason amongst others, this album has both strengths and failures. At face value though it's a pleasant journey through Szely's world, which obviously features many enjoyable audio components and life situations. One that's

Treading the somewhat overgrown but nevertheless trodden We Move Through Weather path of edgy instrumental rock (AKA post rock), Tarentel (Temporary Residence) stand out amongst their peers in their desire to upset the pretty sonics that their instrumentation (drums, guitars, clarinet etc) so obviously lends itself to. Though there are quiet moments they are regularly tripped up in their somnambulance by clarinet moans, contrapuntal drumming and barely restrained feedback. In the 15 minutes of 'A Cloud no Bigger than a Man's Hand' the opening delicate sonic swells are unan a manu une opening uencaue some swens are interrupted by a persisent drum break that sounds like a random snip from a Keith Moon solo (all arms and toms) that is eventually accompanied by a gorgeous guitar arpeggio, only evenually accompanied by a gorgeous guilar alpegelo, only to be inevitably subsumed by organic noise and the constant flailing drums. We're the Only Ghosts Here' pits a mordant piano refrain against waves of static, and on the opening track 'Hello...' the feedback crescendo builds from the opening moments to an extreme that is poignant in its totality and then replaced by sublimely effecting strummed guitar. This deliberate derailing of the pieces is frustrating – it's as though Tarentel deny themselves the beautiful music that they naturally express in spite of themselves, in favour of being difficult or irritating. As an intellectual exercise this strategy has arguable validity, but musically it seems counter-productive, destructive and a little immature. DH

Toshiya Tsunoda Scenery of Decalcomania

Recent visitor to our shores, Japanese field recordist Toshiya Tsunoda is renowned for his desire to record the minute vibrations of sound, having previously recorded the likes of (Naturestrip) motion of air within a glass bottle. On Scenery of Decalcomania Tsunoda suggests that 'an event causes vibrations through a certain space, and the vibrations affect this space.' Tsunoda's interest is in documenting this altered space and in order to do this he sets up a few little experiments for himself and then enthusiastically records the results. Thus armed with three glass bottles, three vibration plates and sine waves he creates a miniature symphonic hum that is gradually overcome by the pitches of the pure sine waves on the opener 'Unstable Contact'. Then there's Wind Whistling', where he records the sound of the wind whistling through a narrow slit in the handrail of a footbridge, the pitch changing according to the strength of the wind, sounding like a gentler higher pitched companion to Alan Lamb's infamous wind on powerlines experiments. Elsewhere he records a narrow cavity under a cylinder resulting in a watery drone replete with nearby bird calls, the sound of a nearby ferry, the almost calming drones recorded from the opening of a pipe, plus other more complex experiments involving oscillators and sine waves. Tsunoda strength is his desire to focus on the microcosm of tiny sounds often overlooked or impossible to hear with the human ear. His recordings are less about static representanument ear. The recognings are rese about status representa-tions of environments than on how the impact of an outside force irrevocably changes a space. Bob Baker Fish

Trade & Distribution Almanac Vol. 2 Various Artists

Last year a new UK label heralded its beginning with a Trade & Distribution Almanac, demonstrating its sound with a collection of predominantly unknown artists. ADAADAT has since cemented their reputation with an album from Utabi (whose Manchurian Candy has everything that's right about Japanese breakcore-meets-folktronica-meets-mid-90s-Warp), and a split CD from breakcore darlings Donna Summer and Ove Naxx. For the second ADAADAT sampler those names join many from the first comp as well as more newbies, for a selection that is ultimately more satisfying than the first. Breakcore's scatter-gun nonsense side dominates much of the proceedings, including the third (and least interesting) breakcore version of the Mario Brothers theme that I know of. Neither Donna Summer nor Ove Naxx turn in particularly good tracks, but CDR's drill'n'bass nostalgia is cute, and 65daysofstatic prove that by rights they're gonna be huge in 2005. Some of the slower tracks have a great digi-cut-up funk to them, and in particular Utabi grounds off the CD with a typically quirky but engrossing tune. Peter Hollo

Various Artists

Late Night Tales Mixed By Four Tet Generally mix CDs of this sort get short shrift by me, but Four Tet has ripped out one of the best mixes of the year on Azuli's latest Late Night Tales. Standing out like a twelve-foot giant's sore thumb from the previous Late Night Tales mixes by Jamiroquai, Nightmares On Wax and others, Four Tet welds together a coherent and involving mix that skales merrily through psych-soul, '70s folk, experimental electronic, astral jazz and hiphop. Manfred Mann rubs up against Terry Riley, Max Roach and an early Tortoise track gives way to RZA's Gravediggaz goth-hiphop. Joe Henderson's epic spiritual evocation 'Earth', with the sublime harp of Alice Coltrane, mixes company with fellow '70s traveller Linda Perhacs before dissolving into Four Tet's own remake of Hendrix's 'Castles Made Of Sand' and so on. It is Four Tet compatriots Koushik and Icarus who also deliver sterling tracks and the '70s effortlessly criss-crosses with tracks from the last year or two, refusing to be genre-bound, but instead deciding to mix by the purpose of sound instead. This is exactly what a mix tape/CD should be - dynamic, slightly nutty, and instilling of the desire to track down other releases by the artists featured in the mix. Sebastian Chan

DVD REVIEWS Various Artists

INTERNATIONAL RELEASES cont Takashi Wada $M_{egu_{IO}}$

 $(O_{nitor)}$

There was one project Alfred Hitchcock dreamed of doing but which remained unfulfilled: a film that would encompass 'twenty-four-hours in the life of a city'. Whether or not wunderkind Takashi Wada knew of the director's idea, he's produced a credible musical equivalent to it. His solo debut, the stylistically rich Meguro, begins at 3am and ends at sunset, with the intervening hours spent taking in a city's architecture, light reflections, fluctuating weather conditions, and landscapes. Wada's compositions are through-composed pieces that eschew soloing and favour rich arrangements with all manner of instrumentation featured throughout. Sounds of insects and lush washes convey a sleeping city at the outset, but the sitar-like glistens, skipping beat, and bright vocals of Morning View' show the city arising. At times, the feel is laid-back and reflective (the acoustic bass and skipping beats in '110th August,' fluid washes suggesting glistening reflections in 'Lights and Water'); at others, it's uptempo, and reminiscent of Cologne techno (the subtle, soft shimmer of '6pm Cityscape') and Kompakt-styled shuffle ('19°C'). The day-long concept imbues the album with a unifying programmatic quality, but the album would still succeed in its absence; one would still sense the joy and peaceful contentment, and the innocent, even slightly naïve, quality reminiscent of Nobukazu Takemura in the recordings. A stylistically rich debut for this young composer. Ron Schepper

Sleeper Coach

 $(L_{oose\ Thread})$

The album begins in waves of lush, pure and dreamy sound that wash over you as formless, almost incomprehensible atmospheres. Gradually they are revealed as the sonic reverberations of a guitar and bass; then as the vocals seep slowly into view, and a few minutes later a plodding hazy percussion begins. This opener 'Sea Bastards', is representative of Sleeper Coach as a whole, a gentle, drowsy meditative work that falls somewhere between the Red House Painters played with the reverb turned up full blast on every instrument, and the density, though not the abrasiveness of My Bloody Valentine. The mood is a slight step up from a Thursday Afternoon Brian Eno', with a similar lush warmth encompassing everything it touches. Whilst their sound has roots in the ambient and drone worlds, Chicago-based quartet Zelienople are very clearly utilising guitar bass and percussion, though there are also hints of piano accordion, organ, vibraphone and possibly some Middle Eastern instruments – all given that sleepy tripped out treatment. Sleeper Coach is a heady and evocative trip, an album that effortlessly fills up the room with its gentle, dreamy grandeur.

Warp Vision: The Videos 1989-2004 $(W_{arp/Inertia})$

A few years ago Warp started talking about releasing a DVD compilation of all their promotional videos. After a couple of Warp screening events in Europe, including Sonar 2003, it has finally seen the light of day. Some of you may remember the early '90s computer graphics that filled Warp's Motion release (1994, VHS only) accompanied by music drawn from the Artificial Intelligence series - but it's been a long time between drinks. Curious, especially for a label that has always released very 'visual' instrumental music, and had such a strong and lasting visual design aesthetic. Warp was Waiting for a medium like DVD that could adequately capture the breadth and depth of their output. What appears on Warp Vision is a detailed chronicle of their music videos, much like the recently released Ninja Tune video compilation. However unlike the Ninja Tune compile, Warp has commissioned some of the most lauded and interesting music videos of the last decade all of which appear here. Of the most well-known there are the story-form clips - Chris Cunningham's incredible Aphex Twin double, Windowlicker' and 'Come To Daddy', and Squarepusher's 'Come On My Selector', and Daniel Levi's clip for LFO's Freak' all appear in their longest unedited versions. Alex Rutterford's intricate CGI work on Autechre's 'Gantz Graf' leads the animated clips along with the excellent stop motion work from Pulp's Jarvis Cocker ('he was the only person we knew who could do video') on Aphex Twin's beautiful 'On'. Of the others – there are 32 in total – there are some groundbreaking clips from Lynn Fox, Pleix, Carlos Arias and promo work from Designers Republic. In a world where music videos generally tend to be short-lived phenomena quickly discarded to the waste lots of uninspired cultural quickly discarded to the waste iots of minisphen cultural refuse, a large number of the Warp videos here surpass their use-value' as promotional tools and become important milestones in modern visual culture. Sebastian Chan

Christo and Jeanne-Claude

Five Films about Christo and Jeanne-Claude $(Pl_{exifilm/Stomp})$

This elegant package from the independent DVD publisher Plexifilm chronicles the long-running and unique collaboration between the contemporary installation artist Christo, his creative partner and wife Jeanne-Claude and acclaimed documentary filmmakers Albert and David Maysles (Salesman and Grey Gardens). The series of award-winning films spanning from 1974 to 1995 stands as a permanent document of the process, the political drama, the emotional investment and the transforming effect the finished works have on all those who come in contact with them. Known for projects as seemingly incomprehensible as surrounding islands around Miami in flamboyantly pink fabric and using fabric to disguise the Pont Neuf in Paris, the pair aim to change the way people view their surroundings — both natural and man-made — drawing attention to the collision between art and everyday life. My previous experiences of and exposure to Christo's diverse projects have all been through repro $d_{uctions}$ in various publica-

tions, so upon viewing these films I was excited at the possibility of these works being brought to life. In Valley Curtain, Christo endeavors to hang a large orange curtain between two Colorado Mountains. The film is an intimate account and practical realisation of installing a project of this scale within a natural environment. The shortest and first film in the series, Valley Curtain marks the beginning of the captivating look at Christo and Jeanne-Claude whilst at work. In this initial film you can see that to capture Christo's work on film enhances it and now I cannot imagine the works existing without the moving images of documentation. Until watching these films I was not aware that Christo and Jeanne-Claude self-financed all of their expensive installations with the sales of Christo's preparatory drawings, collages, scale models and sculptures. In Umbrellas Jeanne-Claude was asked if that project was the most expensive to which she replied 'No' and continued to say, 'Each project costs us everything we have and everything we can borrow'. Selffinancing their project allows Christo total creative control. Each film addresses new territory that the previous left out, while Valley Curtain focuses on the conceptual and engineering realization of the project Christo in Paris delves into Christo's grounding in art history and exposes his personal and working relationship with Jeanne-Claude, Highlighted throughout the films are people's reactions to Christo's work, and this is one of the most intriguing aspects of these documentaries for me. In some films his audience have said his work is 'conceptually offensive', 'environmentally hazardous' and that 'it is just not art'. These opinions are counterbalanced by other's reactions to the completed work which illustrates Christo's sentiments that 'Before everything, it is beau-

tiful. All five films were shot on 16mm, creating the vibrant colours throughout and while sharpness and contrast at first can be distracting are typical of the film stocks used and assist to create a sense of time in the works. Christo and Jeanne-Claude's work are accompanied by an engaging 2004 interview between Christo, Jeanne-Claude, and Albert Maysles (David Maysles died in 1987), and an 80-Page booklet including Taylor's excellent essay and detailed statistics on each of the featured projects. Five Films about Christo and Jeanne-Claude is a timeless testament to Christo's assertion that 'all of our art is about freedom'. It comes as no surprise, then, that the experience of viewing these inspiring films is both liberating and enlightening.

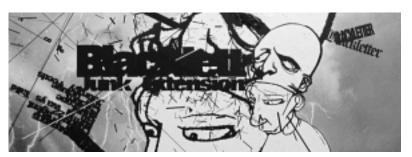
SLEEVE REVIEWS Sleeve Design by Alex Crowfoot



left:
Blackletter's Junk Extensions in
all its chaotic glory
above:
back cover
below:
CD print



toonesque people, looking contemplative and irritated, respectively. Their inky lines are a great contrast to both the photography and the crispness of the line work. And there's a joke for fellow designers too. The name Blackletter is written in the heavy sans serif on the front. But on the back it is written in black letter – that's what's commonly known as gothic writing, an ornate hangover from hand lettering beloved of anyone trying to make something



left: front cover detail look really old or traditional – the word 'Antiques' for instance. But there's more. In 1936, typeface designer Frederick Goudy said 'anyone who would letterspace black letter would steal sheep.' He was referring to the writing on a typeface award he had just won, ungrateful sod. Anyway, here the black letter is not letterspaced (big gaps between the letters) but is very very tightly tracked. Goodness only knows what Dank Realms will do to your sheep. It appears on the back cover in this style and also on the CD, which is printed in black on black. Noice, and a good fit for the record – variously moody and abrasive, with abstracted digi-noise contrasting with fragments of melody and occasional guitars.

Blackletter

Junk Extensions (Vibragun 2004) Format: CD

Designer: Dank Realms

Hot off the presses, another explosive design from Dank Realms for this second Vibragun release which also credits Blackletter for some graphic elements. Here, like a method actor, the graphic chaos has motivation. A photographic background shows the flat earth and superimposed cities being bombarded with lightning. Fragments of letters and shattered keylines are strewn across the digipak by the mother of all storms, which comes complete with twisters. The credits and track listing are similarly thrown around the sleeve like so much debris, the tightly tracked heavy sans serif face varying in readbility. Intricate spot varnishes add a watery depth. Caught in the storm on the front cover and sliced into several pieces are two hand-drawn car-

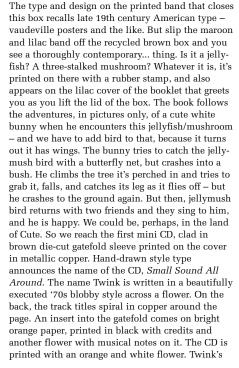
Twink

The Toy Box (Mulatta 2004)

Format: 3 mini-CDs and a picture book in a box

Designer: Twink









Above, right and below: Twink's twisted universe in all its cute wonder

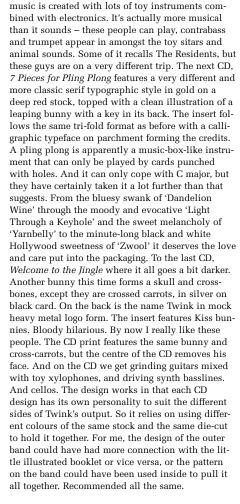
















Clockwise from above: Carsten Nicolai's turntable array in Auto-Pilot; the front cover of Auto Pilot; agf's tiny delight.

Carsten Nicolai

Auto Pilot

(Raster-Noton 2002) Format: CD and book

Designer: Olaf Bender, Jonna Groendahl, Carsten

Nicolai

In the embossing bonanza that was last issue, we showed an example of CD sleeve-as-book. Here is another, although strictly speaking this is a book with CD. It's a retrospective of some of Carsten Nicolai's audio and visual science-art that I just rediscovered on my shelf and it deserves to be covered here. It's a fascinating collection and thanks to

the Raster Noton aesthetic it looks great. The contents run from the



classification of snow crystals by Ukichiro Nakaya (one piece brought the process of their creation into a gallery space) to the effects of different sounds frequencies on liquids; the book contains a series of photos of milk that you can almost hear. Explorations cover the nature of randomness, new forms of notation, the codes and systems of language, the relationship between the mathematical and the organic, and the movements of energy as sound waves. Somehow the potential severity of the aesthetic is always dissipated, and perhaps the randomness plays a part in this. So the book's cover consists of a series of lines and dots from the piece Telefunken Reverso, the CD-holding device and bright yellow core of the CD peeking through a circular die-cut. The CD is solid yellow with copyright details in tiny type, and is held in a gatefold flap inside the cover. The book variously contains fine line work and gallery photography, diagrams, and interview texts. It's well-paced, varying between full-bleed double page spreads, text pages, and illustrations swimming in white space. Transparent plastic sheets printed with strips of black form the centre of the book, recreating part of the Telefunken

Reverso piece. Can someone please bring this work



Format: mini CD Designer: Uncredited

This is a good example of a low budget but quite interesting sleeve. Firstly it isn't square. A plastic closure holds together a rectangle that is printed with bands of navy on cream stock. The title appears on the back in Courier or similar. Snap open the plastic doodad and remove it from the die-cut hole to reveal two more navy stripe-printed flaps that help secure the CD, which is printed half white, half blue and features artist, title and catalogue number in Courier again. A business card accompanies it and contains title, credits, label contact and logo and website addresses. It could have gone further, but it's a nice twist on mini-CD packaging. Musically it's an 18-minute piece of field recordings, creaks, overheard voices, whispering, occasional percussion, DSP and a lovely gentle song at about the eight-minute mark, with a more strident song at the end. The whole piece is very evocative - I would love to see it interpreted visually.



to Australia? Ta.



LIVE REVIEWS SONAR 2004 17-19 June, Barcelona by Dale Harrice



Sonar is a strange beast. The sheer scale of the production and organisation, even in the daytime events, was mesmerising. At times sonically arresting, at others astonishing in its blandness; at times too crowded, and at others, disturbingly empty; at once an epiphany and an exercise in futility, it was, and probably always will be, an enigma.

Taking place in the centre of the glorious ramshackle metropolis of Barcelona, Sonar ran over three days and nights. The daytime events were held in the grounds of Barcelona's premier modern art facility, the CCCB/MACBA, literally in the epicentre of the city. With apartment blocks on all sides, sprouting from the intricate laneways and thoroughfares, the space was like an oasis in a desert of intricate 19th century architecture. The proximity to housing is arresting the daytime events take place on thousands of people's doorsteps - needless to say the locals are a mite tetchy at the presence of so many people, and show it with banners hanging from windows and balconies. The daytime events were generally more experimental and featured showcases from a number of different labels including Lex, Ghostly, Domino etc. The nighttime events were held in the less salubrious environs of a warehouse complex in Barcelona's outskirts, and were basically huge dance parties with the odd decent act sandwiched into line-ups of big name DJs.

Wandering around on the first day was a little futile — still recovering from jetlag and acclimatising to the city meant that I managed to catch very of little of interest. The gallery however, remained open, and was full of Sonar punters (including me for a couple of hours of air-conditioned bliss) meandering through an excellent exhibition on war, with security present, it seemed, to insist only that the public carried their backpacks in front of them.

Carried their backpacks in front of them.

The evening was taken up by a special umbrella event featuring the Barcelona Orchestra in a versus situation with Ryuichi Sakamoto, Pan Sonic, Fennesz accompanied by visuals from Lia, Jon Wozencroft and Videogeist. Despite the sumptuous surrounds of the auditorium and the obvious pedigree of the performers, it was a little lacking in focus and inspiration. Both Sakamoto and Fennesz did little audibly to really interrupt, interact or involve the orchestra, adding subtle DSP effects to what seemed like the whole orchestra rather than remixing (or reconducting) singular instruments – in fact Sakamoto seemed merely to be manipulating a Kaos Pad during his performance. The roles were reversed during Pan Sonic's set and this was far more successful, with the Barcelona Orchestra playing at, around and through Pan Sonic's clinical but organic swathes of sound.

The late evening featured a press launch at a largish Barcelona club. After waiting through a set drawn directly from hiphop's canon (it's great that some things don't



change) we were joined by Big Dada's Roots Manuva and band. Coming on to a just-filling room they took a little while to get settled; the fact that Mr Manuva has selected a band as adhoc and casual as himself may have also played a part. But that's part of the charm, and by the time 'Witness (1 Hope)' was played (featuring two bass players) all the slop finally solidified.

Day two was far more coherent and thus more enjoyable. Despite this I still missed out on more than I saw. The festival curse of crowds, time conflicts and intervening factors (such as eating/abluting/resting) meant that I managed to miss the Spanish hiphop of La Excepcion and Roty340. However, I was stunned to stumble upon Rune Grammofon's Maja Ratke, whose glacial stillness and strength was a tonic to the heat and grit of the day outside. Francois K with a majestic Mutaburaka holding court was another early highlight, with the dub poet riding equally comfortably over abstract rhythms and more familiar dubwise terrains. When the stalwart DJ moved into more housey domains so did I. One of the smaller stages featured showcases from Michigan's Ghostly International and NYC's Brøklyn Beats. Geoff White from Ghostly played a somewhat dry set of messed up instrumental hiphop ensconced behind a laptop, and managed to barely change facial expression through the course of the set. Dabrye seemed far more comfortable, and was far more compelling because of it, even though his set was very similar to the one he had played in Australia in 2003. Brøklyn Beats upped the ante, performance-wise at least, with a quite manic display from Drop the Lime. A skinny blonde kid flipping out to a soundtrack of mashed up drill'n'bass while screaming into a mic was pure gold and easily the highlight of the day. Full of pauses, ruptures and

fuck-ups, it displayed the randomness and chaos that electronica sometimes misses. Doily, although overshadowed by her labelmate, was consumate in her honest set of crunch and syncopation. During the odd break and wander I peeped Prince Po doing call and response (yawn), Prefuse 73 spinning plastic (double yawn) and poor old Fog from Hymie's Basement playing a lonely set post-downpour on the main stage, amongst a mere smattering of audience members (sigh). Deciding to leave the huge night event to the pilledup munters I headed to my hotel via one of the stranger takes on Indian cuisine that I've tasted.

Arriving mid saturday I was greeted by Dani Siciliano in full band mode reinterpreting faithfully her most recent album. Less throat and silk than chest and canvas, her presence and performance were remarkable for their ability to capture the nuance and shade that she possesses on record without optioning on flashy gimmicks, apart from getting Herbert up for a bandoneum solo. Heading over to one of the smaller stages I managed to catch most of Roger Robinson's set of spoken word/hiphop - a large man with a commanding presence, Robinson played tracks from his upcoming album on Jazz Fudge. Expecting his righteous and inciteful poetry I was almost shocked when, accompanied by guitar and violin he proceeded to sing a pretty ditty in praise of sunshine with summery chorus intact and smiles all around. Fantastic, and courageous. He was followed by label mates Dark Circle, a German/UK hiphop crew whose boundless energy, interplay and bilingual verbal gymnastics were a breath of fresh air. And despite their reputation for being a little serious their set never strayed into self-indulgent territory. Nearby a Domino showcase featured Juana Molina, Max Tundra, Fourtet and To Rococo Rot. Juana Molina stole the show as well as my heart with her delicious understated folk songs soaked in gentle electronics. Accompanied by an impishly playful yet portly ginger-bearded keyboard/guitarist, her set was delivered with a quiet charm verging on shyness. Next up. Max Tundra had the dubious distinction of being one of the few acts of substance to really capture the crowd's





clockwise from top: Juana Molina and ginger-bearded compadre; anti-sonar banner hanging from an adjacent apartment block; Roger Robinson in flight; Dark Circle displaying gesticular fortitude.



DETROIT ELECTRONIC MUSIC FESTIVAL (DEMF) by Will Tregonning

In Detroit, no-one lives downtown if they can afford not to. Instead the middle class live a million kilometres away out in the 'burbs and, should they be so unlucky as to work in the city, commute everyday. I'd heard about Detroit's ruined downtown and was expecting to be amazed by the post-industrial melancholia of it all – and I was amazed. It's one thing to be a visitor wandering around appreciating the gritty aesthetic and quite another thing to actually live there, when the 'shithole' aspect would probably take over from the 'melancholic' grandeur.

With a backdrop as poignant as this it was only fitting that the Detroit Electronic Music Festival was fraught with problems of relevance, lack of resources and adequate cash flow.

The cracks appeared as festival organiser Derrick May was hardly to be seen over the weekend. When he did pop up, he was looking pretty worried – not much of a surprise seeing as it was a lot of his cash that was funding the event. Since the festival is always free, they were having a tough time getting anything back. He interrupted Barbara Presinger's (~scape Records) set for an 'important announcement': they needed cash, so could we 'please buy the official merchandise?' Later on it turned out that the power suppliers had threatened to turn off the power the next morning if they didn't get paid and that, as recently as two days before the festival started, the legendary Kevin Saunderson was scraping around for the \$125,000 that they needed to pay the security and sound guys.

Presinger was playing what was called the Underground Stage which was literally underground, in a space a bit like a double-height car park. It had a massive PA that was always turned up too loud to the point where the kicks and bass all just blurred together into a huge, messy, bowelshifting boom that made the top of my skull vibrate. When Presinger played, it was raining outside so the place was packed with 'peakers'. When May interrupted, he apologised for breaking up her 'really excellent set' and I'm thinking: 'bullshit, you only just got here'. As a taste maker she's faultless, but it's a party and if she's going to DJ, she should learn how to mix. But she wasn't the only one with substandard mixing skills. Kevin Saunderson played the penultimate set on the main stage on the last day. This joker's been DJing since before I was born and his mixing was rubbish.

The best day of the festival was the first one, when most of the darker, electro-y people and the Dutch contingent played. Kill Memory Crash were easily my favourite, banging out a rough set of cranky electro. It's good to see producers laying their own vocals over their tracks, even if they are just screaming through a vocoder. I was really looking forward to Legowelt's D&D techno, but he was disappointing, probably because the booming PA meant that you could hear almost

none of the melody and top end, which is really what his tracks are all about.

The prize for the weekend's most amazing after-party venue goes to Ghostly International, who hired out the ballroom of the Detroit Masonic Temple - a massive, slightly gothic, shabby building, from the 1920s. The inside of the building was all stone floors, wide, dramatic staircases, high ceilings, low lighting and massive chandeliers. The ballroom even had a mezzanine with viewing boxes. Unfortunately, in order for it to have looked like a party, they would have needed about another 400 people more than the 150-odd techno geeks, intellectuals and professional-haircuts that were there by the time Matthew Dear bumped out a tough, minimal and occasionally interesting laptop set. There was a pretty amazing after-party where the same Kill Memory Crash played alongside DJs including Ben Sims. It was in three little rundown, sweaty, interconnected shopfronts-rough n' tumble and really dark. Tech-house in one room, bangin' techno in another and electro-tech in another, Brilliant, Another after-party had Japanese legend Ken Ishii playing to a crowd of just 200.

By the last day, when most of the big local names were playing, it got to the stage where I was just praying that Kevin Saunderson, Stacey Pullen and Rolando would be able to save the main event by at least being entertaining. Saunderson's set I've already mentioned. The other two were unfortunately on at the same time and Pullen lost out. Rolando was playing the main stage and he played a mostly excellent, well constructed set. In a good way, it was kind of just what you would expect – some Detroit history mixed in with newer, Detroit-influenced tracks. But the crowd? There would have been a few thousand people there. Only about half were dancing. The rest just stood around. When the MC (Derrick May, hidden behind a speaker stack) was trying to amp up the crowd, no-one was responding to his calls. There was even crowd-surfing and, god help us, girls flashing their tits. It was all so surreal.

Why have a free techno festival for people who, it seems, mostly aren't really that into it? It seems like part of the reason for having a big-ass festival is to pay homage to their own glory. Most of them have been around a while now — some would have released their first record nearly 20 years ago — so I suppose their options are either to fuel the hype or fade away. Many still seem to believe, without a hint of irony, that they're on some sort of futuristic mission for the salvation of music. The festival program guide was full of this hagiographic, self aggrandising bollocks. This is the glaring problem for the festival: that the Detroit sound is, well, kind of boring now. Despite supposedly being the music of the future, it is sounding purely historical. They needed more fresh talent, not just the old men.

attention with a genuinely entertaining and amusing set of his trademark brittle beats viewed through red cordial goggles. Foot on the wedge guitar solo and all. Unfortunately To Rococo Rot fell victim to an unseasonal storm and had their set cancelled, but the faithful few who stayed around were treated to a Fourtet set on two laptops that was recieved by most with harmless abandon.

Fed and watered we ventured out to the warehouse night event. The venue and production were simply awesome - the smallest stage was three times the size of the Hordern, and it was dwarfed by the two bigger hangers; both of which contained stick-figure DJs partially obscured by the curvature of the earth. They were that big. Sticking in the hiphop arena I was treated to a rare glimpse of Madlib on the mic. Billed as a Jaylib show, he was to be joined by Stones Throw label mates Jaydee and Peanut Butter Wolf but was left to fill in time with beats provided ably by J-Rocc. Seemingly unpeturbed he mumbled and stumbled through a set of typical Madlibian genius that was devoid of crowd pleasing schtick apart from questions like 'Do you like Coltrane? You know Sun Ra?'. Obviously left with time to spare he hopped in the drums for one of the most blatantly self-indulgent, embarrassingly incompetent and downright shitful displays of drumming I've seen. I had to leave the room in shame - but when he was joined by Scott 'Prefuse 73' Herren for a drum-off it I returned because the display had entered the realms of high farce. We were then treated to an hour's audience in the aspect of Kid Koala's undeniable virtuosity before returning home.

The three days were ultimately satisfying, but I was left with a feeling of having missed out on just as much. The sheer magnitude of both the venues meant that getting around became a task in itself, and 'stage surfing' (i.e. checking more acts for shorter periods of time) was almost out of the question. Nevertheless a fine few days that lived up to expectations



Both reviews appear in longer form at **cyclicdefrost.com**



GAIL PRIEST SELECTS

In conversation with Sebastian Chan

EVERYONE HAS THOSE SPECIAL RECORDS THAT CHANGED THEIR LIVES. AND THEY AREN'T MENANGED THEIR LIVES AND THEY AREN'T ALLAWAYE AND THEY AREN'T MENANGRAPHE AND IGHT MAKES AND EMPITIONIAL THE MATCH MENANGRAPHE AND IGHT MAKES AND THEY AREN'T EVERYONE HAS THOSE SPECIAL RECORDS THAT CHANGED THEIR LIVES. AND THEY AREN'T ALWAYS JUST TEENAGE SONGS. THE MOST MEMORABLE MUSIC MAKES AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION MORE THAN JUST A TODGE REAT OF A HOT DED EFFECT. ALWAYS JUST TEENAGE SUNGS. THE MUST MEMUHABLE MUSIC MAKES CONNECTION, MORE THAN JUST A 'DOPE BEAT' OR A 'HOT DSP EFFECT'.

This issue's Selects comes from Newtown in inner city Sydney. Gail Priest is a sound artist, new media curator, and works for the bi-monthly arts managine Real Time, Cail's background is in This issue's Selects comes from Newtown in inner city Sydney. Gail Priest is a sound artist, new media curator, and works for the bi-monthly arts magazine Real Time. Gail's background is in media curator, and works for the bi-monthly arts magazine this background that she amproaches and producing sound for theatre and it is from this background that she amproaches media curator, and works for the bi-monthly arts magazine Real Time. Gail's background is in composing and producing sound for theatre and it is from this background that she approaches the composing and producing sound for theatre and it is from this background that she approached an art farly on in her career the appeared on cominal Australian composition for the career the appeared on cominal Australian composition for the career the appeared on cominal Australian composition for the career che appeared on cominal Australian composition for the career che appeared on composition for the career che appeared on cominal Australian composition for the career che appeared on career che composing and producing sound for theatre and it is from this background that she approaches her sound art. Early on in her career she appeared on seminal Australian soap, E-Street, where she was promptly billed by 'Mr Rad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly billed by 'Mr Rad'. her sound art. Early on in her career she appeared on seminal Australian soap, E-Street, which is the same of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. she was promptly killed by 'Mr Bad'. In 2003 she became one of the directors of the annual Electrofringe festival in Newcastle and, along with co-director Vicky Clare, introduced a more Electrofringe festival in Newcastle and, along with co-director Vicky Clare, introduced a more electrofringe festival in Newcastle and, along with co-director vicky Clare, introduced a more concretely in the Australia new modic and making the event more concretely in the Australia new modic and making the event more concretely in the Australia new modic and more concretely in the Australia new modic and more concretely in the Australia new mode. Electrofringe festival in Newcastle and, along with co-director Vicky Clare, introduced a more for malised festival structure establishing the event more concretely in the Australia new media art malised festival structure establishing the event more concretely in the Australia new media art malised festival structure establishing the event more concretely in the Australia new media art malised festival structure establishing the event more of ewest delicate from local case and with a plate of ewest delicate from local case. malised festival structure establishing the event more concretely in the Australia new media art landscape. In between house inspections and with a plate of sweet delights from local cake shop landscape. Calculate through her record collection to reveal come of her musical traincort. landscape. In between house inspections and with a plate of sweet delights from local cake shop that the same of her musical trajectory.

Caketown, Gail trawled through her record collection to reveal some of her musical trajectory.

The Beatles

Sergeant Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band (Parlophone/EMI 1967)

When I was about 14 my mother came home from Bankstown tip with a box full of records. It contained a pretty complete Beach Boys collection that did nothing for me. There was also Sergeant Peppers..., complete with cut-outs and the thickest slab of vinyl I'd ever seen. I listened to it and wasn't too fussed, but thought that perhaps it was something important, so kept it when we got rid of all the rest (I don't want to think what other gems may have been there). I revisited it two years later after being given the lyrics to 'She's Leaving Home' in my English class, and it unleashed an unholy obsession that saw me collecting the entire Beatles output over the course of a year. In 12 months I transformed from choir girl to rebel child, following the lads from skiffle rock'n'roll, through the drug revelations of Rubber Soul and Revolver, finally finding my spiritual home in the conceptual explorations of Abbey Road and the White Album.

Ioni Mitchell

Clouds. Blue & Heiira

(Reprise 1973, Reprise 1971, Elektra/Asylum 1976) From my Beatles obsession developed a deep love of all things folk, and as a wannabe singer/songwriter, what better role model is there than Joni? I found Clouds first -a straight shot of acoustic pleasure. Then I bought Hejira and didn't know what to do with it - all that dark, moody jazz. I forced myself to listen to it. Now there is nothing like the incredibly agile, dark, funky bass lines of Jaco Pastorius on 'Coyote' and 'Black Crow' for a road trip. Blue came to me a lot later. Joni's tinny guitar style and liquid lyrics never cease to do it for me. I will unabashedly say that 'Case of You' is one of the greatest love songs of all time.

Laurie Anderson

Big Science & Strange Angels (Warner Bros 1982/1987)

It's pretty evident that lyrics do it for me. So not surprisingly, Laurie blows my mind. I first heard 'Walking and Falling' when I was 17, as a soundtrack for a dance work in which the dancer lay on the floor and blinked in time. I love the linguistic logic, the philosophical nuances - Laurie's conversational style creating a less cock-driven beat poetry - and of course all her early explorations with electronics and multimedia. I have since repelled many

compilation of the six hour 'Unites States of America' concert. I was particularly influenced by her in my earlier sound works, in the use and manipulation of text, which provided me with a bridge from my performance practice to an electronic-based and audio-focussed approach.

PI Harvey

Dry & Is This Desire (Shock 1992, Island 1998)

The feisty rock-babe in me got really excited by the bold and blatant tracks on Dry. It was the early '90s and I was big on the assertive-female-perspective thing, so her bolshy lyrics really appealed. She was one of the first heavier, dirty-rock sounds that I was attracted to after all that folk. But what I really loved was her conversion from the punky, rock style to the intricate sonic depth of Is This Desire. Here she built a whole other world both lyrically and sonically. The restraint in the production and integration of electronic content has a real brooding, darkly sexy quality about it.

Biörk

Human Behaviour & Vespertine (Bapsi/One Little Indian 1993/2001)

When I'm not wanting to be Laurie Anderson, I'm wanting to be Björk. Everything on Debut opened my eyes. Her vocal abandon, more akin to a jazz singer or wailing harpy than pop utilising every possible timbre: the fusion of beats and found sources; down to the atmospheric recording tech***
'When I'm not wanting to
be Laurie Anderson,
I'm wanting to be Björk.'

niques of 'There's More to Life Than This'. I love everything she does, but book-end *Debut* with the very other-worldliness of *Vespertine* and you see how she goes from strength to strength. The fusion of Matmos' masterful sampling and the extraordinary choral and orchestral moments is something only the weird Icelandic princess could pull of without it ever becoming excessively saccharine.

Tricky

Maxinguaye

(Island 1995)

A friend gave me a tape copy of *Maxiquaye* for my 25th birthday, and the world has never been the same since. I was still in acoustic singer/songwriter mode and hadn't really listened to any electronic music (besides Björk) but all of sudden everything became clear. I could see the structure, loops, laver-

ing, texture and then text. The greatest revelation was (and it still is) those spiky rhythms that emerge, looping unusual sources, the uneven beats and lurches that works so well with the voices.

Belle & Sebastian

Tigermilk

(Jeepster 1996)

The Reindeer Section

Son of Evil Reindeer

(BrightStar 2002)

Obsessive home listening for me is bitter sweet Glaswegian pop, and has been for a few years now. After bagging Belle & Sebastian as limp and sappy on my first listen, they grew on me - now it's like a nasty skin condition. Tigermilk is on high rotation. There's nothing like 'She's Losing It' to set an ugly morning on the right vibe. But my ultimate favourite is a CD compiled by a friend of mine from singles. Nothing beats the three-chord catharsis of 'This Is Just a Modern Rock Song'. And just when I thought I might be kicking the bad habit - post Electrofringe 2003 when I needed some acoustic distraction - I found Reindeer Section's Son of Evil Reindeer. Those painfully sweet melodies with the most devastating lyrical content you'd ever hope to find perfectly articulate every kind of heartbreak you have experienced. 'Now that I've exposed my tune-based listening passions, I'm meant to tell you my favourite sound art

epiphanies, but I don't listen to sound art at home for my own pleasure. I have been known to play Peter Blamey's *Felt*, Joel Stern & Anthony Guerra's *Stitch* (Impermanent Recordings 2002, 2003 respectively), or Scott Horscorft's *8 Guitars* (Quecksilber 2003) from time to time, and quite recently been mesmerised by Robin Fox's DVD *Backscatter* (Synaethesia 2004).

But it just doesn't seem to work by myself – I don't have the same attention to detail and absorption in the texture.

What I love about live audio art events is being gathered in a room with other people sharing that listening experience, having a single uninterrupted focus for a specified time, capturing the sound in time and listening to people listening. In this context I've had plenty of epiphanies – the Husbands at Space 3 in September 2003, Kaffe Matthews in a Berlin cellar in February this year, and Anthony Pateras on prepared piano at Impermanent Audio in April this year. When it comes to art, that initial demand for 'performance' will just never lay and down and die.'



Gail Priest is now retired from Electrofringe and is working on several other projects. Check ou mp3s of her sound art at cvclicdefrost.com



MOUSE ON MARS 'RADICAL CONNECTOR'

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

Brand new album from MOUSE ON MARS, one of the finest names in electronic music. 'Radical Connector' is challenging, fun and totally fresh; a floor filler and a headphone masterpiece. Pop, electronic, dance... these terms define boundaries that Mouse On Mars break down with every track.

From the sleazy robo-pop of opening cut "Mine Is In Yours", to the super-filtered, glam acid disco stomper of first single "Wipe That Sound" and the gorgeously bouncy electro-funk shakedown "Send Me Shivers", this is truly a musical manifesto for mind and body.





Disappointment? You mean one singular instant in my life that has been more disappointing than another? No can do, my friend! My life has been littered with disappointments to the point where I've just tossed them all into a basket labelled 'Disappointments'. Let me rifle through it now and reminisce in a state of perpetual self-indulgence.

BILL COLLINS' DEMISE

The evaporation of Bill Collins from free-to-air television has meant that people are now expected to just watch films without any introduction. How else are you expected to find out fascinating facts and witty anecdotes about the particular print you are going to watch? In fact, I think that I can attribute Bill with my pernickety love of film and, more generally, pop culture. Thank your respective deity that cable TV has snapped him up and he can bring further joy and information to my life. How can you not trust a guy who lived with his mum until she died of old age and then promptly married her best friend?

I remember Bill Collins presenting Flashdance on free-to-air and going on about a huge disappointment he had with the film. In fact it so disappointed him, that he was afraid that if he revealed it before the film, he might ruin people's enjoyment of it. So if we wanted to find out what it was, we would have to go and see him at some shopping centre public appearance the next day. My father and I speculated as to what it might be and he came up with an answer: Jennifer Beales was actually a man.

For many years I thought dad had to be right



we didn't really
see Jennifer much on screen
after that. It was only recently that I discovered the truth. It turns out that Jen didn't actually
do any of the dancing in the film – most of the hard
work was done by French dancer Marie Jahan.
However, Marie didn't know how to do a backspin,
which features so prominently in the climactic
dance scene. Hollywood, having stacks of cash said,
'Hey, let's get the best of the best to teach Marie to
backspin in just one day,' and so they called in
Richard 'Crazy Legs' Colón of Rock Steady Crew
fame. When he told them that you can't teach a
backspin in a day, they asked him if he wanted to
do it. After being shown the money, Crazy Legs
donned some leg warmers and a leotard... and millions of horny men were none the wiser.

FERRIS' FIDDLER

'Ehhhhhhd Rooney', otherwise known as Jeffrey Jones who played Ferris Bueller's nemesis principal. I'd always been a huge fan, but wait, what's that? Busted for child molestation. Nice one, Ed. I've never been able to watch him utter the words 'The game is up. Your ass is mine,' in the same way since.

SILENT SOUNDTRACK

And whilst we're on the subject of Ferris..., I wish I could invite John Hughes around to my place for dinner and then box him around the ears for his distinct lack of good judgement. Foolishly, he decided not to release an official soundtrack of the film. He felt that the mix of songs would have been far too eclectic to have sold successfully. From the Star Wars theme to the most beautiful cover of a Smiths track ever (and yes, all you trainspotters who think they can teach me a thing or two, I do own the Morr Music compilation, and The Dream Academy's version of 'Please, Please, Please Let Me Get What I Want' is far better). And who on earth would admit to knowing who Wayne Newton was if it hadn't been for the street parade scene?

DURAN DURAN

I know I harp on about this one, but it deserves another mention: Duran Duran supporting Robbie Williams! SUPPORTING! I honestly shed tears when I found out about this situation, but I shed further tears when the 26-year-old work colleague who was scoping for Robbie tickets asked me who Duran Duran were. I could have solved NSW's drought crisis with my tears! Only it gets worse. Whilst up late recently, I found myself watching a batch of 'fresh' video clips and once-raunchy-nowpaunchy Simon Le Bon was leading the pack of similarly be-jowled Duran Duran leftovers with a terrible comeback single [which incidentally has been adopted as theme music for channel 7's Sunrise -Edl. Didn't they prove that their creative pool was starting to resemble a desert back in the mid-'90s with the release of 'Electric Barbarella', a nod to the film from which they stole their name.

Time for another patented Degrassi segue... I've had a blast writing this column over the past six years, but unlike Duran Duran, I've decided to hang up my boots before I wear a hole in them. Stay tuned for the next *Cyclic Defrost* for a tacky, Vaseline-soaked 'Best Of'. And hey, who knows, five years from now I may come back for a reunion issue sporting an appalling hair-do!



Alas, Degrassi will be going the way of Sex and the City, Friends and Dicko and shall not be returning next season. She will of course be featured heavily in reruns and may appear in cameos for such things as Christmas specials and the like. A 'best of' will appear next issue.



Various

Skåne Revisited (New Speak)
This album takes as its starting
point the amazing tune Skåne,
drawn from Andreas Tilliander's
1998 album 'Vena'. New Speak's
hand-picked team of mixers
rework the original - staying true
to its original inspiration, but not
its sound qualities. Remixes by
Xela, Bauri, Ludvig Elblaus +
more....



Dunaewsky 69Contiguity (Shaped Harmonics)
This debut album from Ukranian
project Dunaewsky 69 is a
beautiful atmospheric album
that is romantic and subtle.
Warm analogue synths abound
in this modern take on classical
music.



Various

Switches (Audiobulb)
A unique compilation from
Audiobulb Record's global roster.
Switches contains 14 complex,
beautiful and disturbing tracks each acting as a unique switch
bringing new elements of audio
exploration to the listener's
experience.



Various

Infiltrate 6.0 (Rice and Beans)
Miami's Beta Bodega, Merck,
Counterflow, Botanica Del Jibaro,
Hometapes and Metatronix labels
convene for their sixth annual
anti-Winter Music Conference
blitzkrieg. The result? A blistering
collection of tracks from the city's
revered underground hip-hop
sector (only available on vinyl).



Spark

Super Robot Battle Deluxe (n5md)
The perfect mix of acidic old school hardcore, breakcore trickery and subtle subliminal melodies that leave you wanting the battle to never end..."Super robot battle deluxe" is an infectious mix of modern experimental electronica.



Tiki Obmar

Seasons (Merck)
Another quality Merck release
with tunes that move you with
deft arrangements and mooddriven melodies - includes new
material from tiki obmar plus
remixes by helios, cepia, proswell,
machinedrum, proem, tim koch,
deru, deceptikon, la muerte
blanca, miles tilmann, and adam
iohnson.





f.s. blumm & friends

Sesamsamen (Plop)
Another high quality release from this loveable Japanese label. F.S. Blumm, who has previously released on Morr music, explores the concept of cooperative composition. A symphony of his friends contribute to this album inspired by Blumms guitar based ethiopian rhythms. The end result is a lush world full of emotive soundscapes and random experimentations.



Keef Baker

The Widnes Years (n5md)
In his debut album Keef Baker draws together disparate realms of IDM and breakcore producing an album that is wonderfully diffused with anger and sadness.



Ontayso, Sense, Tim Koch

Where have you been?
What have you done?
And why? (u-cover)
One hour of diverse and inventive electronica - manipulated sounds and voices, broken rhythms, joyful drums.



Keep an eye out for these upcoming vinyl releases..... Machine Drum - Bidnezz and Machine Drums - Now You Know (repressing). Couchblip! now also distributes: Spezial Material, Neo Ouija, Spekk, Yunx, Shadetek, Lacerated, Device, Semisexual, Type, Kracfive, Coredump + more. Available now at all good record stores or online at http://distribution.couchblip.com. Distributed by Couchblip! distribution@couchblip.com

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New full length album releases on Feral Media in 2005

















The Emergency: June



In November 2004, Feral Media will release the SBS Whatever Sessions 2. In 2005, four full length albums from outstanding Whatever artists will follow; Barrage, The Rich, Sparrow Hill and The Emergency.

Mieli - Version **FM06** Released on Oct 18.

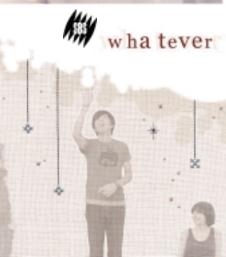
Lovers of graceful clicks and cuts will be entranced by this debut. Mieli launches Version at Frigid @Newtown on Sunday October 24 with a rare Sydney performance.

Various - The SBS Whatever Sessions 2 FM07 Released on Nov 1.

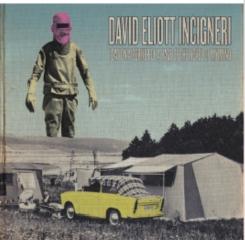
Exclusive tracks from Australia's brightest underground musicians, recorded at SBS' multitrack studios, Artifishal Limb. Barrage, Cinco Locos, The Emergency, Fo_Tran, ii, Minimum Chips, The Tigers, Velure, Wagons and more.

37 tracks, 28 bands. 2CDs: 146 minutes of pure enjoyment.









Comatone - E-50 FM09

Released on Nov 15.

Comatone's latest offering, E-50, follows his acclaimed debut One Into One Out. pushing the envelope again to create a modern sonic tour de force. Think Kid606. Akufen, Autechre and Squarepusher, but with Comatone's unique DNA.

David Eliott Incigneri I Sat On A Corner Of A Page Of The Novel Of My Mind FM08

Released on Nov 1.

An ambitious, lo-fi, pastoral soundscape with no boundaries. Think Bowie's Low recorded on a Pentium II.





FM01 Bankton EP









Distributed in Australia by MGM. All releases also available online at www.feralmedia.com.au

In 2000, SBS began Whatever Music - seeking underground, unsigned artists and

For more info and exclusive multimedia content: www.sbs.com.au/whatever

recording their work. The SBS Whatever Sessions 2 - the best so far.

FM05 Catrip