a world behind curtains | april 2010

FEATURING:



ALEXANDER BINDER



A. VELLUTELLO



KENNETH ANGER



BLACK CHURCH



KIEW | 13TH MONKEY

N-SPHERE APRIL 2010

EDITORIAL TRANQUILIZERS

tanding outside the Black Church, there is just the briefest of moments in which neural pathways interchange into allowing the sight to sink in deep beneath layers of memory. The divine and the occult seem to intertwine in this focal point. Be it its architectural symbolic nuances or the reminiscent fantasies that Bram Stoker poured over the region of Transylvania, the occult comes to mind in a natural, neutral, accepted form.

Transcending the rational, vampirism was enticed as a form of art and sustained along decades in both literature and film. Tourist attractions nowadays delve in mis belief, as some underground communities celebrate a genuine passion for the undead or the common curious swallows old stories with a hunger for the exceptional. Breaking these barriers is the art of

Alexander Binder, blending together both pagan and occult symbols, in an imperfect yet suitable (a)chromatic expression.

There is never enough of fantasy in what concerns the human psyche. From the damaged mind to the self-healing attributes of art, there are concepts that have become recurrent inside the musical realm. Such is the latest KiEw album, that shapes a peculiar sonic asylum. Amid beats and shouts, whispers and melodic flows, the sounds allow the ear to catch a glimpse of fragmentary flexible acoustics.

Another day comes when dawn breaks and dreams burn away with a single touch of sunlight. Nevertheless, shapes returning to reality cannot dull down the mind's need for reverie. Relentlessly, fantasy resides once again in the world behind curtains.

vel.thora













Editorial Tranquilizers | 2 |

Glass Showcase | 4-9 | Alexander Binder - Germany Stone Showcase | 10-13 | Alessandro Vellutello - Italy Moving Showcase | 14-19 | Invocation of My Demon Anger Clockwork Showcase | 20-25 | Black Church - Romania Hanging Cages | 26-29 | Scythe Abuse Showcase | 30-37 | KiEw & 13th Monkey - Germany Chains & Scissors | 38-41 |

Eye Teaser | 42 | Rik Garrett - United States

ALEXAN

GLASS SHOWCASE DER BINDER

»A SILENT HIDEOUT AT THE END OF THE WORLD«

Name:

Alexander Binder

Location:

Stuttgart/Germany

Occupation:

By Day: Working at the office as an unremarkable white-collar worker By Night: Working in the woods as an unremarkable photographer

Definition of personal sphere:

A silent hideout at the end of the world

Artwork in 4 words:

Dark, bright, occult, otherworldly

What is inspirational for you:

The Black Forest

Currently favourite artists:

Theodor Kittelsen, Henry Peach Robinson, Hans Bellmer, Stephen O'Mallev

Tools of trade:

D-SLR camera and objectives made from optical toys, plastic crap or duct tape

Current obsessions:

Transylvania and Vampirism

Personal temptation:

Autosarcophagy











STONE SHOWCASE ELLUTELLO

»SUCHIS THE DANCE THIS WRETCHED RACE MUST LEAD«

Name:

Alessandro Vellutello

Lived:

1473 - unknown

Location:

Venice, Italy

Occupation:

Illustrator, painter, intellectual

Influences:

Biblical scenes, La Divina Commedia

Associated with:

The first artistic commentary on Commedia, XVIth century art

Connections:

Francesco Petrarca, Dante Alighieri

Obsessions:

Circles, the geography of Hell, human contortions, Christianity, the sphere of the Sun, ascension, cycles, circular design

Quote above: Dante Alighieri. Divina Commedia - Hell Photo right: Alessandro Vellutello (comr.). 1544. Lucifero



after profite ingles ingles sentengelett his vero whis capits provided to the inglesses decima hum that hum deposited to the provide to the senten bean demonstrated to the sentence of the sentence of the profite to the profite ingles to the sentence of t

KENN

MOVING SHOWCASE ETHANGER



INVOCATIONOF



MY DEMON ANGER

Screenshot | Scorpio Rising

efore John Waters, Alejandro Jodorowsky, David Lynch or other directors whose names we don't hear whispered in the private moments of some more or less interesting exponents of the prefabricated/advertised mannequin societies, unleashed upon the more or less fortunate viewer their celluloid treatment, Kenneth Anger played his card with films such as Fireworks, Rabbit Moon or Scorpio Rising.

With only nine (IMDB says 23, but the other 14 either pass unnoticed, either have no relevant details, so I'll stick to nine) short (to medium) features, Kenneth Anger became a very influential figure in cinema and not only there. Regarding film as a magical weapon he introduced the public to a body of work that was audacious and at the same time visually stunning, yet - especially in that period - hard to dismiss.

The cinema is a very resourceful medium because there are basically no real rules once one displays some talent. Of course, that can perhaps be said about any form of art, but in cinema one sees and one observes. And the image is always a powerful tool, sometimes it is even more powerful when it becomes a moving one. Anger's films never used traditional narrative, because they didn't need it, in the same way Carl Theodore Dreyer's La Passion de Jeanne D'Arc wouldn't have been the same if it wasn't a silent film. Silence beclouds and, when used well, might create a level of intimacy between the viewer and the material. When the image takes over, words may become unnecessary. Words are approximations, images aren't.

So what does Kenneth Anger's work mean? According to the director himself, his films are ceremonies capable

of invoking spiritual forces. I can't say anything about the part involving spiritual forces, but yes, his films follow a ceremonial setup. They are highly symbolical, their characters either portray gods, forces or demons, or are embodiments of contemporary pop culture icons [sensesofcinema. com]. It is nearly impossible not to notice a slight documentary approach... and also there is a great deal of mys-

tical insight - an aspect which holds no interests to me as a reviewer (at least).

However, I think this is hardly the point. We don't watch films to assimilate complex and readable structures; we have books for that. Movies work as vehicles. At least the ones we like work that way. The universe of Anger's films marries phallic refer-



ences with ceremonies, Jesus Christ, Nazis. It is all very dazzling, but also exciting for those with the hearts for this kind of stuff. Inspiring, also.

Some people say that it is harder to create a narrative, than plain images. I believe otherwise: it takes longer - maybe - to create a narrative, sometimes it is way more difficult to come up with the appropriate images. It is

also easier to believe the narrative over imagery argument, because we see images. Once seen, we can't imagine how it was like to conceive them.

There is another aspect: the film as myth. It has been written about it, there were even motion pictures about fictional *myth-films* (John Carpenter's *The Cigarette Burns* is on of the latest) and there is a considerable amount of film-goers who crave for those *myth-films*. In many cases, those movies are not to be gladly shown to one's beloved children, unless of course one solemnly believes that the purpose of one's whole existence is to bring back to life the long-gone-lost Adams' Family values. The directors behind those myth-films generally aren't portrayed as the ones we see from Hollywood. On the contrary, they dismiss it and its conventional techniques, being fascinated by taking power over the viewer. Moreover, they are more likely to stir monstrous controversies rather than walk quietly and smiling on the red carped of fame. Do any of these sound familiar already?

Now, I do not believe in myth-films and I am not assuming that many people believe in them either, but they need a starting point and Kenneth Anger's works fit very well in the presented profile. Sometimes we do not like films because we consider them to be good or we do not say that a certain movie is a masterpiece because we really believe that to be true. It is only an encouragement, it is a process of creating new references. Where does this lead? I don't know yet, but I can see it has been started for some time.

However, none of these undermine Kenneth Anger's importance. He is a bold director and those that are fascinated by cinema and have a soft spot for darker visuals, pop culture and the more unpleasant motion pictures, may really enjoy his works.

This is it for now, but only for now, because I'll get back on Kenneth Anger (and not only him) in the next episode. Till then, we can all watch the fireworks go down Rocketfalls.

by shade Screenshot | Lucifer Rising

BLAC

LOCKWORK SHOWCASE K CHURCH

»A DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE HERETIC AND THE DIVINE«

Descending on the train platform in the city of Brasov is an experience as normal and usual as it gets. However, once one steps foot outside the station, there is a certain atmosphere that can only be found in Verona. From the sunny air, to the mountains that can be seen somewhere in the close distance, the trip towards the historic center is brief and colorful. Both cities have their own perks when it comes to tourism, both making use of history blended with fantasy, facts and imagination thrown together in a precarious balance that allows one to dream for a brief period of time.

Brasov, sometimes known as the gateway to Transylvania, has a decently preserved historic center, and in the midsts of baroque rows of buildings, there rises dark the Black Church. As the largest Gothic piece of architecture in the middle and eastern Europe, this monument was built during the better part of a hundred years (late 14th - late 15th century). Initially named the Church of Saint Mary, it was restructured with baroque inner arches after a city-wide fire in the 17th century when it received its current name.





The Black Church has an aura of mysticism that should be regarded skeptically by the rational mind. Nevertheless, once one steps foot inside, the world is allowed to transgress, perceptions transform, the walls reshape themselves and all senses mingle together in a wave of sudden exaltation. Known for its 3993 pipes organ, the building has the perfect acoustics. Taking one step on the stone floor reverberates into the stained glass windows all the way along the columns and ribs, dispersing in the air once it reaches the tall ceiling. Built during the 19th century, the mechanical Buchholz organ is the only functional one of its kind in middle and eastern Europe.

Coming to life in the 12th century, the Gothic style's first representative is the Abbey of Saint Denis. Located in northern Paris, this royal French necropolis was the predecessor of one of the most imposing architectural types along the ages. Considered to be the form that built a path of light to the divine, the Gothic style was primarily used for religious edifices, such as London's Westminster Abbey, Notre-Dame de Paris, the German Kölner Dom in Cologne, Basilica Papale di San Francesco d'Assisi in Italy or the Spanish Cathedral of Seville. Arches that seem to rise towards infinity by an inventive use of a palpable vanishing point blend with deformed demonic statues creating a dichotomy between the heretic and the divine, heaven and hell, among which the human realm is frailly suspended.

Perceiving the interior of the Black Church is not enough, as the full experience of placing the building in a concrete context is required in order to fully grasp its effect on its immediate surroundings. Following the old city wall, one can make way towards the Black and White Towers, two of the still standing vestiges of the medieval fortification system. The path up to the Black Tower is demanding, the inner wooden staircase that lacks railings squeaks and shakes at each step, but once one arrives at the top, the view presented makes it all fade away inside a timeless mental framework. The tower's glass roof reveals a bird's eye view of the old city. Underneath, inside the vestiges of the old wall, red rooftops are crowded together in a peculiarly fresh chaos. The attention is focused down on the city. Mountains and sky and, subsequently, the entire world disappears for a brief moment. As the eyes travel around the medieval urban conglomerate, the 65 meters tall black clock tower of the church rises magnificently, trying to steal away the breathless viewer, connecting throughout dimensions to the mind of the one that was just inside. It's the point in which space spares a moment to bend in on itself and perceptions once again mix into a web of atemporal displacements of the self.

A dark stone jewel, the Black Church is a monument standing somber in celebration of the divine light. A disunion in itself, this architectural piece is a sanctuary to the duality of the medieval human mind, suspended between the zenith and nadir of theistic beliefs.

photos & text | vel.thora



HANGING CAGES SCYTHE

»IT WILL NOT END IN A CIRCLE«

sense of dread grabbed my throat and my legs suddenly took strange initiatives in moving towards your shadow. I guess you still run through my veins. Wherever I go, whoever I hurt, you'll be there to gloat at the torment, collect ammunition for your nonsense. I wish I could simply ignore you as you lay with me in the dead of night, but that is something I haven't tried to do in a while. And besides, you've not yet grown tired of your source of amusement. Something tells me I'm not the only one you perceive as a puppet, but sadly for you, yourself. Here's a thought; take a break and return to your world for a while. I'm sure you have matters to attend to somewhere else as well. And don't say that you cannot leave me because I am your favorite puppet. I am but my own. My own puppet, my own error and misbelieve, and, why not, my own broken mirror. Otherwise how could you be

able to see so clearly the threads you cast in order to attain those few last steps you're relentlessly seeking. And you stand proud, with satisfaction dripping from your eyes, drained, not understanding the limitations you are bound to obey. Yet a child's happiness overflows from sentient eyes, and a peaceful smile confuses you to the point of sheer insanity.

Then, a silent dance took both of us, binding our weaknesses with frozen demonic shaped ties, as we entered the arena you chose for us to perish in. The wind started singing its mortuary tune from distant times, awaiting a morbid choir to come into action, death notes swirling around like reincarnated fireflies. Listen closely. What do you hear?

It will not end in a circle. Not this time. But in a swift blow that will splatter the blood onto the audience.







ABUSE SHOWCASE 3TH MONKEY

»I'M HERE ABOUT SOME MONKEYS. TWELVE OF THEM.«

:: As an introduction and to present you to our readers: who are KiEw and 13th Monkey and how did they come into existence?

KiEw is a group therapy project situated at station Odessa, occupied with producing medical material suitable for broad-band audiotherapy. In the course of events following the installation of that therapy project Dr. Thiemicke, Dr. Kulcke and Dr. Thedi ended up being locked in room 72 of the high security sector of the station, afterwards being addressed as patients /t, K and mdw (i.e. master of madness). Desperate and partially successful attempts of escape, disguised as 29 persons for example, finally spawned a whole range of new

therapeutic theories one being called "redefinement of the paradigm of bang", author being the 13th Monkey, also a split personality which includes Harm and former Dr. Thedi.

:: Are the two projects intertwined or would you say the influences between them are at a minimum?

KiEw and 13th Monkey complement each other very well and the influences are actually a matter of existence for both projects, although they substantially differ soundwise and the roots of creation are different: The early versions of KiEw tracks are first constructed in the studio and then played live, the 13th Monkey tracks are done by livejamming





and are recorded later in the studio (also live without overdubs). A great example for influences on each other is the track Mister 29 - this was first a KiEw track with vocals done by Ambassador 21 we then used some parts and some vocal samples to do a 13th Monkey version of Mister 29 which sounds totally different - a completely new track. To form a circle we thought it would be cool to also play the 13th Monkey version of the track live with KiEw, so KiEw not even plays the own version of the track but also the 13th Monkey version - which again sounds different from both versions. You can listen to those different tracks and versions on the 13th Monkey and on the KiEw album - on the KiEw album is also a live recording of the former KiEw track, redone by 13th Monkey, live interpreted by KiEw (Monkey 29 - live at FSK Hamburg).

:: At the beginning of March, KiEw released a new album, mental [per] mutation. Its theme follows your previous works, bringing to life a sonic asylum, in which doctors and patients communicate through sounds. What is new in this release?

There are some differences between the latest and earlier releases. In early releases we have had inspiration from cans. Nowadays the sensitivity to hearing music in noises and sounds around us increased to a maximum, so the diversification of sounds and styles in our latest release also increased to a maximum. Also the quality of the process of production in general increased to a new maximum, which is a little bit dangerous, because inside our sonic asylum aseptic circumstances did not reach their possible maximum, so it is getting harder to add the minimum needed dose of dirt into the journey to our sonic asylum.

Kind of new in this release was the way the album was done. We took our time, did raw versions of the track

and put them aside for a long time and waited until they had been mutated. We deleted some of those. Some of the tracks we first tried out live on stage and then rearranged, reinterpreted and remixed those versions for the album.

:: The album starts off with a trailerlike piece for a supposed documentary, Montreal Permutation, which brings the listener into an imaginative state enhanced later on. How does the order in which you play your music, be it live or recorded, integrate into the KiEw concept?

It is all a very calculated but extremely complicated system, involving all kinds of numbers as displayed on the several KiEw releases. The mathematical delicacy of the whole order of numbers as they intertwine with sound and songpriorities, for example in the dramaturgy of a live-audiotherapy or of the silver medication, is something we are almost unable to handle by now, let alone explain it as a phenomena.

:: mental [per]mutation has a peculiar name. Would you argue that it holds a double meaning of elastically shifting through different mental states and the plasticity of irreversible changes of the psyche, or does it represent something completely outside the asylum theme?

It definitely goes further than the asylum theme, it might be even a sort of religion, hard to tell at this point. It's probably a sort of evolutionary algorithm that can't be documented just in numbers but only in a combination of number, word and sound.

Besides the mutation and/or multiplication of our own personalities the permutation of roles is also a main point. The doctor/patient-role is exchanged in multiple ways until in the end it is not clear who is doing the therapy with whom. The patient (who could also be a doctor) is wearing

the doctor's overall and treats the doctor who is now permutated to the patient-side and has to ask himself if he is now a doctor getting therapy or a patient... You can't draw a strict line between the doctor/patient-role and also not between different mental states - everything flows. The line inbetween is so narrow that we shift often enough between the sides without realising it.

:: The retro feeling in Melancholie is augmented by the sudden beat changes of the background into slides of quasi-echoed sounds. Does reality shift the same way or are we prisoners of the immutable?

We have to define reality, especially according to the differences between reality and virtuality, madness and sanity, human or replicant. As long as the Voight-Kampff machines is able to fail or as long minority reports exist, there is only one possessing the absolute truth: me. If we define reality as a construct of your mind, then you will find the existence of at least about 7. 10° realities. Maybe we are kind prisoner of our self-constructed reality, but by realizing that we will not become able to break out, but at least we have realised it, so we can try to think about further steps to go. Mozart does not help at all, I guess.

:: The general sound of this piece seems to envelop most of the registers one can hear in an airport, from imperceptible echoes, to broken female voices, to chatter and announcements, all superposed over sounds that remind of jets passing by. Could one say that life is only a continuous transit, or is there a final destination to all?

We do not expect any final destination but the asylum Earth.

:: Continuing the previous line of thought and considering this depiction of an isolated mind among strangers, are we responsible for



making our transit enjoyable, or does that depend merely on our surroundings and exterior influences?

Short: You get the transit that you have booked - it always depends on yourself though in some bad cases you have no influence on the weather or the driver.

:: »Paranoia is a malfunction of the ability to reason/I can reason, therefore I am not paranoid« is the number one thing to remember, in Delusion. How would you define reason and is there any way this could be a relative notion, characteristic to a person's own mind?

Reason is based on your way of thinking so it is for sure a relative notion which is characteristic to a person's own mind. So reason can be logic or not - based on the viewer and the thinking person.

:: Delusion is filled with repetitive symbolic words. Could the entanglement of a calm pronunciation of the word paranoia and the immediate grinder effects mean a depiction of compulsions transgressing into obsessions?

You could answer this by yourself if you now pronounce the word paranoia calmly for ten times. Are you getting obsessed?

:: Does the dissociation between never ending and ongoing in this piece shape the transfer from the limitations of the human mind to the infinite nature of its abnormality as madness can be never ending and delusion - ongoing?

The line between sanity and insanity is very narrow and based on the viewer so it is more the limitation of the mind of the doctor who defines that the patient is *mad* or *crazy* - in his eyes.

:: There are flexible changes of measure in 70, from uninterrupted acoustics to the small pauses in the second half of the repetitive motif. Can one say that this imagines the difference between analog and digital, as one embodies continuous states and the other makes reference to fragmentary lapses in consciousness?

Yes, one can say that, but that is not exactly the point. For being the last track on mental [per]mutation, 70 prepares the listener to return back to that, what might be called reality and hopefully does not come for a long stay.

"There seems to be a predilection for the medical in both projects. Mixes of madness and mania within the image of a *friendly* doctor are found throughout your pieces. Where are the roots of these themes coming from? The most important influence is life and what is connotated with it, the experience of any day, decisions of others, which are not part of common sense but that influence you as a person and you ask yourself, whether you ought to accept it, if yes: you become insane, if no: you ask yourself a following question: have you already become insane or is it the other one?

:: The latest 13th Monkey album, Redefining The Paradigm Of Bang is balanced on a wire of well shaped beats. How do you see the connection between rhythm and noise in this release?

13th Monkey is all about beats and noises - which makes it great to listen to on the motorway! As 13th Monkey is based completely on livejamming but not on a studio construction it always changes. We just meet and play around with our synced pattern based-machines until we both like something and then we might play that in a set. On one hand you have kind of straight beat patterns on the other you have live improvised noises, feedbacks, synthlines, distortion and fx. Everything mutates from time to time and sounds different in every set. 13th Monkey fits well in the gap between industrial and techno - which results in playing on both kinds of parties.

:: Does the name 13th Monkey have any connection with the movie Twelve Monkeys that depicts a world devastated with disease? If not, would you see this as a connection with the audio therapy theme present throughout your works?

»I'm here about some monkeys.« »Excuse me - what did you say?« »Monkeys. Twelve of them.« (quote from the movie 12 Monkeys)

Yes, the name 13th Monkey is inspired by Terry Gilliam's movie 12 Monkeys. It is said in the movie that you have to let the monkey loose to be immune against madness. We have let the monkey loose and now it is head of a rebellion. The name is also inspired by the fairy tale of the sleeping beauty: In the fairy tale by the brothers Grimm the 13th fairy is not invited and curses the child. The 13th Monkey is not nice, it is mean like the evil fairy. Times are getting harder!

": Your live performances are quite a delight. How do they integrate into the concepts you convey and how important are they when bringing your music to the audience?

The live performances are just normal consequences of the way our minds work. So the insanity on stage is a reflection of our inside. This differs from the mood and from day to day - so sometimes we seem to be more calm and balanced and sometimes you might think you should call a doctor. For sure everything is part of the KiEw concept but to talk about importance - it is not needed - we can also just give you a concert without show - all depending on the tsate of mind.

:: Are there any involvements of the KiEw/13th Monkey members in other projects?

We are involved in lots of other creative projects. The other half of 13th Monkey, Harm, has the projects Harm and Sysex, plays in Klangaquarium and is also specialized in doing projections (Aerosol Light Textures), on the KiEw side Stephan plays in 3 minutes later and also played in Segmentation Violation and Totentanz, Matthias has the project Die Lieder des K and plays in Wildcardcharacters and Song Of Songs and is also doing stage design and architectural stuff. Besides KiEw and 13th Monkey I have a solo project called *Thedi* whih is also the name I use when djing and I am playing in Seki and have an ambient project which still has no name.

:: Do the members' musical/artistic backgrounds coincide or are there any differences between past influ-

ences that become factor in the emerging music?

We are not bound to specific musical styles - although some parts of KiEw prefer an electronic main focus towards Industrial/Techno/Drum'n'Bass/Dubstep/Breakcore, nearly all genres influence us - which you might realize when you listen to mental [per]mutation with open ears/mind. Before KiEw we did several musical and art projects together and influenced us so much that we thought it was time to put that energy together in a collective.

": There are always remixes of your pieces. Is this a means to achieve progress, or is it a manifestation of perfectionism?

It is great to get your tracks [per]mutated by other creative people who have a different view on the tracks. The result is always interesting - some artist rearranges the remix around the central elements of the original track, reconstructs it or puts a special element in the front, another artist destructs it and creates something completely new and different just using a tiny little element of the original - I love both the slightly different view and the total destruction. If I work on a remix myself I never know what the result will be when I start but in the end it will always be a different view on something, your personal thoughts, a statement. By integrating remixes on our albums or releasing them on the webpage we give people a platform for a statement. It is like a discussion - someone says something and others join in with their opinion.

:: Have you ever happened to think that a remix sounds better than the original?

Every remix sounds different from the original and it is different in a special way so I would prefer to say that it sounds different. Sometimes you think "great view on that special element - would have also fitted in the original"

or »fantastic interpretation of the original«, but I would not say that it sounds better or worse than the original - it just sounds different - and that is great!

:: Where do you see KiEw and 13th Monkey in the near future? Should the listener expect the same sound that pulls the mind into alternate realities?

The mind of the listener will be pulled into alternate realities by different sounds. It is always progressing. WE are always progressing. So everything changes. You have to accept and face your past to create your future - so you have to pick up splinters

from your past and use them to build something new for the future. By using those splinters you will always think »oh this is KiEw« or »oh this is 13th Monkey«.

:: To sum up, how would you describe the KiEw and 13th Monkey spheres? Are there any overlapping points between them?

The overlapping point is for sure the same thing that got answered above: Life - which is not only part of the creative process but for sure influences us in personal and creative ways. You could see KiEw as the synapses in a mad mind, the inner part of someone - 13th Monkey is then the outer

part, how the person with the mad mind behaves and acts. Everything is about insanity in a more or less recognizeable way.

> photos & questions | vel.thora answers | Thedi of KiEw & 13th Monkey



CHAI

LISSORS

39





