

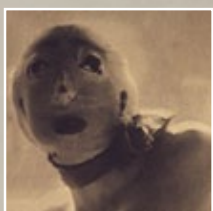
IN-SPHERE

a world behind curtains | january 2011

FEATURING



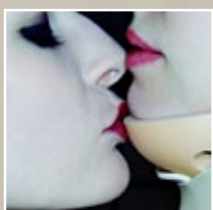
KRISTAMAS KLOUSCH



BARON DE MEYER



CRASH



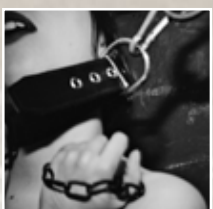
KAOS BEAUTY KLINIK



COUM TRANSMISSIONS



DBE II



DAN BLACKLODGE

N-SPHERE

JANUARY 2011

EDITORIAL

TRANQUILIZERS

A game is a reason to smile, while playing catch and slapping your opponent, running around with bruised knees and torn socks. But what if a game would often be a chance to grin? What would become of the innocent chase, the imprudent grabbing of wrists, the soft fluttering of skirts and the laughter caused by falling in the dirt? What if while growing up the game becomes a living breathing boo-monster that pushes their owner towards unknown limits of the human endurance? This creature, let's call it Ailihparap, is like a childhood friend that can hold its owner's hand and play the game.

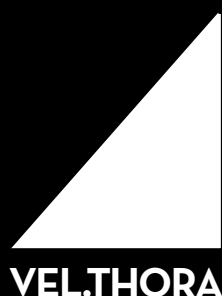
In the works of *Kristamas Klousch* the game wears cat years and the fiend is tiny, hiding under the bed and looking out with big curious eyes. As time progresses, the maturity of the game makes itself visible in the pieces of *Richard Kadrey* and *Dan Blacklodge*, with delicate bruising and violent tenderness.

The creature, this sweet enticing depraved creation of the human sexual deviations, has many talents. It lives inside engines and in the depths of mischief, it runs along highways and wrecks the extreme, it resides inside *David Cronenberg's Crash*.

This beast is not always cruel, not always sweet. Sometimes, it's just plain dirty and straightforward. A sensual release, an exciting escape from daily motions, this entrapment of the hidden brute's raw nature comes out to play in the *COUM Transmissions* performances.

»The world owes its enchantment to these curious creatures and their fancies; but its multiple complicity rejects them. Thistledown spirits, tragic, heartrending in their evanescence, they must go blowing headlong to perdition.«

Quote: *Jean Cocteau. Les Enfants Terribles. 1929*



VEL.THORA

INDEX

2

JANUARY
2011

Editorial
Tranquilizers

34

NOX
SHOWCASE I

Kaos Beauty Klinik
United States

82

NOX
SHOWCASE II

Dan Blacklodge
United Kingdom

4

GLASS
SHOWCASE

Kristamas Klousch
Canada

48

CLOCKWORK
SHOWCASE

COUM Transmissions
Guaranteed
Disappointment

96

CHAINS &
SCISSORS

Hone-Onna
Untitled

18

STONE
SHOWCASE

Baron de Meyer's
Harem of Muses
United States

56

ABUSE
SHOWCASE

Dark Bombastic
Evening II
Gig Review

100

EYE
TEASER

Geoid

26

MOVING
SHOWCASE

See the breaking glass
In the underpass

78

HANGING
CAGES

Wish list 101

KRISTAMA

GLASS
SHOWCASE
S KLOUSCH



»CREATING EXPLORING SELF EXPRESSION PASSION«

Name:

Kristamas Klousch

Location:

Montreal, Canada

Occupation:

Selfportrait Artist/Photographer

Definition of personal sphere:

[not answered]

Artwork in 4 words:

Creating, exploring, self expression, passion.

What is inspirational for you:

Exploring the forest where I live, visual language.

Currently favourite artists:

Aleksandr Rodchenko, Francesca Woodman, Joel Peter-Witkin, Cindy Sherman, Lewis Carroll, Julia Margaret Cameron, Marilyn Manson. The list is never ending and always changing.

Tools of trade:

Various cameras - always a remote and tripod.

Current obsessions:

Russian avante garde cinema.

Personal temptation:

Cupcakes.



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. I live in a cemetery of dolls. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Still life. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Cat ears. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Waiting on St. Anne. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Oh. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Little apple. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Detached. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | *Kristamas Klousch. Red mask. Courtesy of the artist*

BARON HARE

STONE
SHOWCASE
DE MEYER'S
M OF MUSES

»THE DEBUSSY OF PHOTOG- RAPHY«

Name:

Adolph de Meyer

Lived:

1st September 1868 – 6th January 1949

Location:

London, UK. New York, US. Paris, FR

Occupation:

Photographer

Influences:

Theatre life and contemporary socialites, pictorialism

Technique:

Pictorialist abstraction, under-spotting faces versus backlighting, dramatized poises, stillness, composure

Associated with:

Associated with: Vogue Magazine, Vanity Fair, Harper's Bazar

Influenced:

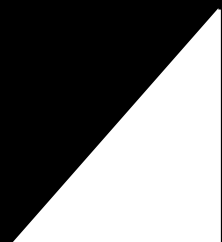
Ira L. Hill, Charlotte Fairchild, Frank E. Geisler, Alfred Cheney Johnston, James Abbe, Nickolas Muray, George Hoyningen-Huene, Cecil Beaton, Horst P. Horst

Obsessions:

Ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky

Quote | **Cecil Beaton**

photo right | **Adolph de Meyer.**
Etude de Danse. 1912



VEL.THORA





photo | *Adolph de Meyer. Ruth St. Denis in The Revelation of the Goddess from Omika. 1913*

Like a muse, she stands there, all absorbed by the intricacies of human desire. It doesn't take long before her eyes fall upon the walls around her, noticing the hard metal hooks. »Would you care for a cup of tea, my dear?« he asks her suddenly and she jumps up, her heart beating its way out of her chest. She nods quietly. He kisses her temple and checks the gag tightly secured to her mouth, then disappears out of the room. She returns her eyes to the walls and feels her skin crawl with delight and curiosity and disgust and fear at the long night ahead.



photo | **Adolph de Meyer.** *Ruth St. Denis, The Revelation of the Goddess in Omika.* 1913

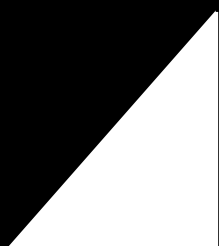
»Raise your head« he whispers. The shutter releases again and again in the morbid silence. »what a sight« he crawls around her, watching her body through the lenses...

There is silence. Deep, immutable silence. And a shutter releasing in a dark room, at the edge of insanity.

SEE THE BRE
IN TH

MOVING
SHOWCASE
**MAKING GLASS
E UNDERPASS**

»SEE THE BREAKING GLASS. IN THE UNDERPASS«



DIANA DAIA

2011 – now. 1996 – Cronenberg re-
leases the film *Crash*. 1973 – J. G. Bal-
lard releases the novel *Crash*. 1960
– Camus dies in a car accident. 1955 –
James Dean dies in his Porsche 550.

*Hear the crushing steel. Feel the steer-
ing wheel. Now let's go back to hyper-
reality.*

Lyrics | *The Normal*.
Warm Leatherette





Hear the crushing steel.

Bringing into focus a group of people living in the urban landscape of Toronto (London in J.G. Ballard's novel) who share a common fascination for car crashes and the exploration of sexuality, Cronenberg's *Crash* has created controversies for both its elaborate depictions of intercourses and sexual fantasies in technologically-filled settings, and the ambiguity concerning the treatment of the machine-sex-death triptych, a constant triangle throughout the film and novel alike. At the core of the narrative is placed Vaughan, a man who used to work in the TV industry, now obsessively staging and filming scenes of car wrecks, gradually gathering material for his head-on collision with actress Elizabeth Taylor. In his search, Vaughan meets James and Catherine Ballard, a couple attempting to revive their sexual relationship, and from then on the plot

develops into a continuum of auto-crashes, celebration of wounds and new forms of sexuality, increasingly involving more persons.

A tear of petrol is in your eye.

Crash has often been read as a transgression of existing limits, such as the celebration of a new sexuality born from the embrace of the machine as an extension of the body. But what if the invasion of the body by shards of machinery, the breaking glass and its reflections, the persons pushing their own limits in a continuum of explorations of the body, the steering wheel and handbrake penetrating open wounds, do not merely present the future as a fetish or a hyper real space which lacks emotion and desire as suggested, for instance, by Jean Baudrillard in *Simulacra and Simulation*? What if the fascination about *Crash* (both the film and the novel) is about borders, and the space of negotia-

tion and fluidity they create? A hypothesis.

On one level, the paraphilias endlessly explored in *Crash* draw attention to wounds as open sexual orifices and the techno-body investigated through a continuum of death simulacrams. In this sense, the well-known dichotomy of Eros / Thanatos and Apollo / Dionysus are reconstructed and questioned, leading to a growing fascination for the body and the machine – both as central elements of contemporary society. On a further level, this constant investigation places the temporary borders at the core, transforming them into spaces where *inside* and *outside* are in a continuous shift, where the public and private spheres are in constant reversal, where the hybridization of those boundaries questions the very position of the signified and the signifier, of the subject and spectator. The point where mutation takes place is



given either by the wound or the existence of characters such as Vaughan, the car as a symbolic technological entity, the actors on the list of possible auto-crashes, the camera which draws a thin line between spectators and performers. The outcome is not important, but the continuous games of reversal and simulation, creating a seducing narrow zone which functions as a catalyst.

In *Religion and Culture*, Michel Foucault defines transgression as »an action which involves the limit, that narrow zone of a line where it displays the flash of its passage, but perhaps also its entire trajectory, even its origin«. Therefore, transgression does not only involve the space existing after the limit is crossed, but also the »narrow zone of a line« where the shift takes place. In *Crash*, most actions and encounters between the characters (most of them being, perhaps not coincidentally shift-workers,

junior airline personnel, car-park attendants, waitresses and stewardesses) seem to revolve around transit points, hence placing emphasis on this passage of change and mutability where two sides converge: roads, airports, duty-free malls, hospitals, multi-storey car-parks. In the case of hospitals, a cycle is repeated endlessly, as people are born in infirmaries and die in emergency rooms. The link is not only created between an individual and others who suffer from similar injuries (hence, almost paradoxically, fostering a sense of »community«), but also between life and death, a hospital bed thus becoming a place for persons waiting in an invisible line for their moment to arrive.

Throughout the film, we also get a large number of longshots of bridges, almost as if humans try to escape the claustrophobic landscape through a possible autogeddon taking place on the bridge where cars form an

apparently endless row of contortions. Following Vaughan's example of launching himself into open space, a techno-apocalypse would become the transgressive act which provokes massive suicide and ends death. Although the given coordinates are simple, the citizens become more seduced by the snake-like row of cars forming and fragmenting itself endlessly, without heading towards a breaking point. The asphalt roads become a magnetic border and a chaotic realm of flux and motion.

The hand brake penetrates your thigh.

In 1960, Elizabeth Taylor stars in *Butterfield 8* (Daniel Mann). Impersonating a poor and promiscuous fashion model named Gloria Wandrous, she dies in a high speed auto-crash which also marks the end of the film. In a constant attempt of transgressing her social conditions and bal-

ancing her unsteady sex drive, the young woman finds herself trapped in a love-technology-death triangle constantly nourished by the oppressive society and the need for speed. It is perhaps not coincidental that Vaughan chooses Elizabeth Taylor as the person to die in a head-on-collision with him, their car crash leading to an eternal union similar to that of Siamese twins. However, his interest is not solely oriented towards Elizabeth Taylor, but towards all public figures who have a life considered different than that of ordinary persons. Through the medium, either film cameras or photographs, a mutation takes place: on one level, the private lives of screen figures become public, linking them more to the collective spectacle than to the personal sphere; on a further level, through the auto-crash, they are at the border between life and death, between humanity and the possibility of reaching immortality through transcendence. The aggressive collision also enables an immediate mimetic identification of the witnesses with the victims. Hence, the actress Elizabeth Taylor would no longer seem different, but average, thus erasing the dichotomy between spectator and performer.

Quick, let's make love before you die.

At some point in the film, James Ballard asserts that »The world was beginning to flower into wounds«, therefore the wound seems to function as a commutation space between the body and the psyche, but also between the individual and the collective. The body is no longer an impenetrable shell, but instead an uneven surface dominated by incisions, the surgery being primarily performed by technology. It is also a powerful eroticized narrow zone where the wounds become artificial orifices that gradually deconstruct the supposed rules

of sexuality and annihilate the role of natural organs. The bond created is not only one between body and machine, but it also links, on the one hand, two different individuals and, on the other, a conventional form of sexuality with a new one waiting to be explored. Differently, when the wound creates a bond between an individual and a collective during car collisions, the private and public registers communicate through the open orifice, which leads to a mutation of the public sphere. The interior comes out while the outside infiltrates: by witnessing, viewing and analyzing the subject, the injury is no longer private, but is instead relocated in the collective spectacle. Later, the wound becomes a trauma, hence creating an additional bond between the psychic and the physical pain, between the *inside* and the *outside*.

Join the car crash set.

The collision of visionary aesthetics and transgressive iconography within Cronenberg's *Crash* make it a film worth watching. Without isolating it as a complementary entity, J.G Ballard placed the car-crash culture within a hyper-real space, which thus erases dichotomous pairs and notions of past or future. The created society is positioned at the threshold of transgression, where the fragment and the border are privileged over a hypothetical unity. The question remains: in the end, what makes *Crash* popular even almost 40 years after its publishing when technology is already pre-2011?

photos up & right | **Crash. 1996.**





KAOS BEA

NOX
SHOWCASE!
UTY KLINIK

NAME:

RICHARD KADREY AKA KAOS BEAUTY KLINIK

LOCATION:

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES

OCCUPATION:

WRITER AND PHOTOGRAPHER

WEBSITE:

KAOSBEAUTYKLINIK.CARBONMADE.COM



photo | *Richard Kadrey. The Opium Room. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | **Richard Kadrey.** *Blue Crutches.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | *Richard Kadrey*. *Blindfolded Wynd*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Richard Kadrey. *Bad Teddy Gets Lucky*. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | *Richard Kadrey. Probing Lolita. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | **Richard Kadrey. V & E 2.** Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Richard Kadrey**. *Girl fun*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Richard Kadrey.** *Untitled.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | *Richard Kadrey. Standing Tall. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | **Richard Kadrey.** *Bagged.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | *Richard Kadrey. Wrapped in Plastic. Courtesy of the artist*

C

TRAN

LOCKWORK
SHOWCASE
COUN
SMISSIONS

»COUM

TRANSMISSIONS –

GUARANTEED

DISAPPOINTMENT.«

One could hardly image how Yorkshire slang and Turkish cyclamens would conjure up a glimmer of excitement in the eyes of industrial music aficionados and art geeks alike. But the answer is clear cut: Throbbing Gristle and COUM Transmissions.

The starting point of this legendary mess of performance art, experimental music, pop culture and of course scandal, would be the Northern England city of Hull in 1969, where Neil

Andrew Megson (Genesis P-Orridge) and Christine Carol Newby (Cosey Fanni Tutti) stirred things up through their artistic happenings that included everything from improvised music to street theatre. Or more precisely, if we were to quote a COUM flyer, their activity included »Coumusic, Lightshow (film and slides), Folk, Inflatables, Catastrophe Machines, Vaudeville, Music Hall, Tapes, Bingo, Ballet, Trained Animals, Puppet Show, Street Theatre, Fashion Show and Pass the Parcel.«



**SIMINA
NEAGU**



everything about coun is nothing



everything about coum is true

Being immersed in the late sixties avid search for alternative lifestyles and means of expression, they joined the Ho-Ho Funhouse commune in Hull, while Genesis left for London to collaborate with the performance group Transmedia Explorations. Needless to say, these experiments proved unsatisfying for both Cosey and Genesis, thus determining them to intensify their activity in COUM. But how would they define their group? »COUM is the sum total of everything said, thought and written about it, plus everything in all media it does, plus everything it never did, thought of doing, might have done, etc. COUM is defined by TOTAL INCLUSION.« One of the main interests of the group was to always contradict expectations, something that could also be observed in Throbbing Gristle's unrelenting desire to avoid labels and preconceived ideas.

Being heavily involved in mail art and consequently, in contact with a growing network of artists, they developed fictional organizations such as L'école de l'art infantile or the Ministry of Social Insecurity. But soon enough, Hull had become too provincial and limited for COUM's creative energy. In 1973, Cosey and Genesis moved to London and found a studio at 10, Martello Street, in Hackney, where Death Factory would later be located.

Drawing on influences from the Viennese Actionists, a group of artists that sought through ritualistic and often violent performances to break the taboos of a highly conservative Austrian society, COUM staged numerous happenings such as »Art Vandals«, »Marcel Duchamp's Next Work«, »Couming of Age« or »Throbbing Gristle« and participated in several group exhibitions like »Fluxshoe«, »Hygiene de l'art«, »Postal Art« or »Kitschmas 73« in Europe and North America.

photo up | **SCENES OF VICTORY**
#3 solo COUM Transmissions action by Genesis Breyer P-Orridge at Death Factory. London 1976.
Courtesy of the artist

**»REALITY
WITHOUT
ART IS
ONLY HALF-
REALITY.
ART
WITHOUT
REALITY
IS NO ART.«**

photo left | **SCENES OF VICTORY**
#3 solo COUM Transmissions action by Genesis Breyer P-Orridge at Death Factory. London 1976.
Courtesy of the artist

In Genesis P-Orridge's words: »COUM theatre is intensely honest and accessible. Disarmingly simple. Intellectually complex, reconciling conflicting levels and attitudes. COUM combine intellectual force, popular culture and sheer comedy.« Genesis further explains: »We expand ourselves to boundaries, even destroying, condemning ourselves to forms of madness and isolation«, also tracing a parallel between COUM and sexuality, undeniably a central theme of their work. »Sex is sensual, delirium, escape, key to magick, joy, excitement«, quite similar to a COUM performance, as they wanted »people to be themselves«, abandoning »all these false ideas one has of oneself.«

From the very beginning, the group explored notions such as the male/female binary and set out to blur fixed gender roles, while Cosey developed her own type of performance art. By working as a model for pornographic magazines and as a stripper, she subverted the male gaze that objectified her, through conscious approval. In a sense, Cosey was well ahead of her fellow artists that pertained to the same feminist struggles, since she acknowledged the performative aspect of gender identity and its culturally-constructed quality.

As one can imagine, dealing with repressed emotions and social taboos wasn't exactly what the public and art institutions were expecting. Often dismissed as nonsense, COUM Transmissions was described as an »anti-human piece of evil« or to quote the infamous remark of a conservative politician »these people are the wreckers of civilization«. But the constant controversy surrounding COUM escalated to massive proportions in October 1976, when they had their solo exhibition »Prostitution« at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London. The deliberate purpose of

the show was to scrutinize the relationship between money and art or the importance of representation and to subvert high art expectations. The exhibition showcased pornographic images with Cosey (available on request), props and photographs from previous performances and press cuttings. In some way, it was conceived as a retrospective of COUM and possibly as a shift to Throbbing Gristle that performed at the opening. However, the heated debates it stirred, ranging from public spending on arts to the state of contemporary art, surpassed the initial scope of the show. Reactions were violent and the exhibition was described as »squalid rubbish«, »sickening outrage« and a »celebration of all social evils«. Disgruntled and frustrated by media pressure and the lack of support from the art world, COUM members decided to focus their energy on Throbbing Gristle, comprising Genesis P-Orridge, Cosey Fanni Tutti, Chris Carter and Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson. Wanting to address a larger and more diverse audience, TG expressed their desire to »subliminally infiltrate popular culture.« TG was at the same time an attempt to »popularize academic concepts and blend them into what people thought was a popular culture medium. A rock band which was actually not a rock band.«

What followed next is a piece of music history, which will only be explored very briefly in this article. In 1981, Throbbing Gristle is disbanded, each of its members continuing separate projects. P-Orridge and Christopherson formed Psychic TV and the religious organisation Thee Temple ov Psychic Youth. Three years later, in 1984, Christopherson leaves PTV and forms Coil, along with his partner John Balance. During this time, Chris Carter and Cosey Fanni Tutti performed under the name of Chris and Cosey and initiated the projects Creative Technology Institute and Conspiracy International. In

2004 Throbbing Gristle reunited, but the current situation of the band remains unclear due to the unexpected death of Christopherson in November 2010.

In their words: »The archetype has been investigated, the information is stored.« TheMission is Terminated.

»COUM WILL SAY OR DO ANYTHING FOR PUBLICITY.«

Further reading: Simon Ford, *Wreckers of Civilisation: The Story of COUM Transmissions & Throbbing Gristle*, London: Black Dog Publishing, 1999

photo right | **GENESIS BREYER**
P-ORRIDGE COUM Transmissions
action at Kielinie/Spielinie art fair.
Kiel, West Germany. 1975.
Courtesy of the artist





ABUSE
SHOWCASE
DBE II
GIG REVIEW

DARK BOMBASTIC EVENING II

WHEN

10th & 11th December 2010

WHERE

Kulturhaus. Bucharest. Romania

LINE-UP

Day 1.

Desiderii Marginis | SE

Dirty Granny Tales | GR

Irfan | BG

Simone H. Salvatori | IT

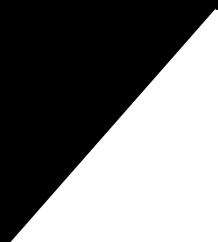
Day 2.

Seventh Harmonic | SE/UK

Ataraxia | IT

Arcana | SE

Naevus | UK



P H O T O
VEL.THORA



MUSIC

DAY 1.

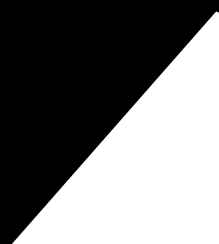
Disclaimer from the author: a very personal, therefore boring, review - following my own obsessions and personal biases.

Two years have passed since their first event and Kogaion and Donis Art still amaze me with their perseverance and stubbornness in organizing underground concerts reaching to a limited amount of individuals. When the program of this year's Dark Bombastic Evening had been revealed, I found the first night more appealing through its diverse line-up and interesting bands who were to visit Romania for the first time. Although I wasn't familiar with all of them, I decided not to listen to their music beforehand, nor read anything about, and instead rely on the live experience and expect anything/nothing.

I arrived on the first night a little bit late, in the middle of Johan Levin's (Desiderii Marginis) performance, only to find a somewhat distracted public. To be honest, I didn't manage

to induce myself a proper mood either. Not only on the account of the surprise to find out he had to go first - contrary to what the official signboard was mentioning, but rather of my personal and probably old-fashioned conviction that this kind of music, which requires perhaps a certain type of audition similar to the one required by classical music, is not compatible with the sorts of setting Kulturhaus had to offer. A better location would have been, in my opinion, the Reduta Cultural Center - previously used by the organizers for similar events hosting Arcana, Ataraxia, In Slaughter Natives and others.

After a quite abrupt finish, Desiderii Marginis was followed by Dirty Granny Tales, the band I was most curious about. Four strange characters stepped (barefoot) on the scene, whose appearances, ranging



ROXANA
VASILE



photo | *Desiderii Marginis live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*

from broken, ragged dolls to allegedly grim corpse-paint enthusiasts, promised – and later confirmed – an unusual and original show. From the first notes which gave way to a twisted lullaby, I was mostly drawn to what seemed to me a healthy dose of self-deprecating humour. The action got more complicated, as from the second song, other characters began entering the stage and a whole story about different human experiences unfolded, involving an array of custom made puppets and costumes, intelligent interludes for dance solos and interventions from the members of the band themselves, assuming an active role in the play and becoming key figures for the narration. A show thought and rethought, implying a good amount of work invested, with impeccable interpretations, left me wondering how much of a crippled experience would it be only to listen at home *Didi's Son* album.

Later on, the pause in between Dirty Granny Tales and Irfan, continued by an extended soundcheck, allowed me to observe closer the instruments which one by one were brought on stage: a portable harmonium, the more exotic daf, saz, oud, duduk and others, hinting what was to follow. Inasmuch as Irfan and Isihia were the first (roughly tagged) neofolk and neoclassical Bulgarian bands I got acquainted with, and considering that once they had musicians playing in both these projects, I've always felt encouraged to view the two bands, as complementaries, since the two stands are both Balkan in essence: one looking towards the vernacular culture and folklore and the other one towards east, aided perhaps by the generally more neglected heritage left by centuries of direct Ottoman rule, which included, among others, policies of repopulation and conversion to Islam.





photo | *Dirty Granny Tales live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*



photo | *Irfan live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*



Playing a more eclectic card, the musicians from Irfan composed a balanced playlist for Friday night (even preview songs for the next album), ensuring a trip which brought to my mind the the vivid visual memory of wandering through a rather dull town, full of communist-era blocks, and discovering and entering a lavishly decorated Djamia centuries-old (Bayrakli Mosque in Samokov, Tumbul Mosque in Shumen), bearing on the walls words in the arabic script that add up to a paradoxical "intimate estrangement". Providing such a setting favorable for other possible worlds, the musicians, with the support of a very receptive audience, attempted convincingly to draw an arch through various eras and places, offering their own interpretation of turkish and persian classical music, oriental christian chants, western medieval chants and music, Renaissance, once in awhile returning to folk and old church-Slavonic singing. In spite of the problems with the sound system, all the band members played in a flawless manner and again, the live experience proved to be better.

Next, and supposing to close the first DB evening, was Simone Salvatore, trying to perform "a solo version of different songs". I recommend searching for other reviews, because the weak performance that started out, and the invasion of Kulturhaus-on-Friday indigenous customers encouraged me to leave earlier. :/

To be continued with the Second Evening of DBE II.



photo | *Dirty Granny Tales* live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010



photo | *Dirty Granny Tales live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*

DAY 2.



**ADRIEN
SEELEBRUDER**

Evil spirits seem to have been cast upon this year's 2nd edition of Dark Bombastic Evening, prolly Romania's (& to some extent Eastern Europe's) answer to the well known Western & Central European industrial, goth, experimental & underground music festivals. There were many bad omens hinting at possible failure & they started to manifest themselves even months before the 2-day festival's dates.

First of all, the venue was changed, from the grandiose The Silver Church to the hipster-ish Kulturhaus. Last year's 1st edition had all the ingredients, from the bands - focused on nostalgic neofolk & bombastic martial industrial - & perfect sound, lights, visuals to the wonderful venue, The Silver Church, a spacious & classy, yet not pretentious location

featuring columns, arches, chandeliers, candles & torches creating a perfect atmosphere for the 1-day then festival. I'm sure the organizers realize that the setting & atmosphere for such an event are extremely important & maybe this is a reason for their announcement of next year's location for the festival, somewhere in the open in the heart of Transylvania. My guess is that Dark Bombastic Evening III will take place in an old fortress, maybe Alba Carolina or in other related sites in the city of Alba Iulia. Oh, & another thing, the date's changing, from the traditional 2nd week of December to the 19th & 20th of August.

Secondly & the most important bad omens were of course related to the festival's line-up. Some bands due to various reasons had to drop out of the festival or cancel their shows



photo | **Seventh Harmonic live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010**

starting with Sunset in the 12th House (a new musical project featuring former members of Romanian black metal band Negura Bunget), continuing with Naevus' disband (though leader Lloyd James did come for a solo acoustic Naevus setlist) & culminating with Tony Wakeford's statement that Sol Invictus will be unable to make it to the festival due to some health problems (Tony did record a video message for the audience in which he kindly apologized for the inconvenience, wished us all the best & gave us a preview of a new song from Sol Invictus; felt so sorry because of Sol Invictus' absence from this festival, definitely my first choice to see at this edition & I'm sure that a great number of those who bought tickets were really looking forward to seeing this icon of the neofolk & neoclassical scene perform live on Kulturhaus' stage. Hope you'll be able to make it here & play in the near future, Tony, till then keep it cool, take care and control!)

Enough of "what could have been DBE II" & moving towards the live performances of the 2nd day's line-up: Seventh Harmonic, Arcana, Ataraxia & Naevus.

Seventh Harmonic - an English neoclassical group founded in late 1999 with an all-female line-up. I arrived about 15 min. after their show had started & their set seemed decent & standard for a neofolk/neoclassical band. Because Ann-Mari Thim (vocals, Arcana) was unable to supply vocal duties because of a sore throat, Seventh Harmonic's set was 100% instrumental, with some highlight points like the violin bow guitar playing & the percussion sector. Also nice visuals to fit their music style. All in all, a decent & enjoyable live performance.

Arcana - the neoclassical/darkwave



photo | *Arcana live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*



photo | **Ataraxia live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010**



group founded in 1993 & hailing from Sweden was the next name on the list; all the members appeared on stage wearing only white clothes, including fellow Swedish musician Johan Levin (Desiderii Marginis) who joined the band on stage for some songs. Arcana, being for the 3rd time now in Romania & familiar to a lot of the audience presented a nice, standard setlist filled with their traditional ethereal atmosphere, though less focused on its medieval feel; too bad Ann-Mari vocals were yet again absent. Prolly the most significant moment of the night came at the end of Arcana's show, when Peter Bjärgö announced, with tears in his eyes and tremble in his voice, that this might well be Arcana's last live performance (after the show, la Bjärgö confirmed to me that it was their last live on stage) and that the Swedish group will surely disband. After a few seconds time, there was a rain of applause from the awed audience and shouts of respect for the band & their entire body of work during the past 15 years.

At the end of Arcana's show, during breaktime, the organizers screened Tony Wakeford's video message and the audience appreciated the Sol Invictus leader's gesture.

Ataraxia - the Italian cult neoclassical/neofolk/ethereal folk ensemble formed in 1985 - had announced that their show will consist of 2 distinct parts, the 1st one focused on their more traditional music style (which the organizers had labeled on the event's poster as "cosmogonic folk"!) which is also featured on their latest album *LLYR*, while the 2nd part of their live performance will revolve around a dark cabaret concept associated with their 2006 release titled *Paris Spleen*, an album inspired by Baudelaire's late 1860s work, *Le spleen de Paris*. Their scenography

for both parts, especially for the 2nd one, was delightful – the sound & set, the wonderful costumes, a mad S&M paggliaccio/pierrot acting on stage & the whole La Belle Époque atmosphere were high points and it seemed like Ataraxia was doing this type of dark cabaret show for years & years, like they have been this type of artists in their previous lives. Francesca Nicoli's presence & performance were absolutely fab & dedicated (such a penetrating voice from such a beautiful & *trv kvlt* female leader of the band, truly a *gnostic Sophia of the European neofolk scene*, Ataraxia almost resembling a mini-matriarchate) & her band mates also lived up to the audience's expectations & even to their name as a group – *ataraxia* – or to put it better in other words, *the killers of apatheia*. Thus, their show as a whole, lasting for nearly 2 hours, was surely the most impressive one from the 2nd day of the festival & proly *ax en aequo* in beauty & originality with Dirty Granny Tales' performance from the 1st day of Dark Bombastic Evening.

Closing the 2nd day & the festival was Lloyd James or, as he stated, “all that's left of Naevus”. You might consider this the 2nd musical project from DBE which disbands & plays its last live show after Arcana. After more than a decade of work, James decided to put an end to Naevus and focus on an acoustic solo career with his first solo album, *The Division of Labour* coming out soon. James delivered a modest performance in front of a small audience, many of them leaving after Ataraxia's show and many compared his poor live show with the one from the previous day delivered by Spiritual Front leader, Simone Salvatore. All in all, Dark Bombastic Evening II had its highs (Dirty Granny Tales, Ataraxia) & lows (Simone Salvatore, Lloyd James).

Considering all the sheer bad luck around this 2nd edition of DBE, the organizers have their excuses (considering the long list of events in Romania organized by Kogaionon & Donis Art & their dedication, they have lived up to their goal of bringing some of the most interesting names in underground music – from dark ambient, neofolk, martial industrial and neoclassical to black metal, doom metal, post-rock and even dark cabaret), though there were some low points – like not having fillers in case an artist has to cancel its show or at least reduce the price of the tickets, the venue, reduced line-up & audience, some disappointment regarding the live shows of some artists, a slight distancing from the music styles of the first edition which focused on neofolk & martial industrial to a more neoclassical & dark cabaret edition (some people complained about this shift, but for me it was an interesting choice). The audience's number decreased this year with more than half if we compare this 2nd edition with the 1st one from 2009 when there were like 500 persons from Romania & all around Europe. All in all, we have to appreciate the organizers' (Kogaionon & Donis Art) attempt to continue the Dark Bombastic Evening tradition which started in 2009 and we can only hope for a new, different & interesting experience during the summer of 2011 in the heart of Transylvanian land.





photo | *Naevus live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*





photo | *Ataraxia live at DBE II. Bucharest. 2010*

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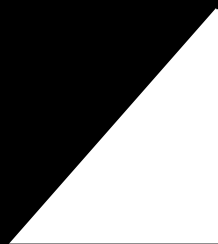
»RAISING BLACK WIDOWS FOR ILLEGAL RACING«

I feel like creating mushroom clouds all over the world... I feel like sleeping in the afternoon just like I once used to, before my mom would wake me up to wait for Santa... I feel like burning down the face of the good mother earth with meteoric harshness... I feel like erupting endless judgments on other's sanctity...

I feel like stealing a solar storm just for myself... I feel like melting down the oceans and every living thing around me... I feel like playing the guitar and writing about the sounds you do not hear... I feel like dreaming in infrared and smile in ultraviolet, and take a casual stroll through radio frequency spectrum, just for the hell of it... I feel like sliding down microscopic slopes... I feel like apologizing to everyone I ig-

nored for not ignoring them sooner... I feel like mastering the art of contempt... I feel like taking up a career in airbrushing ugly paintings... I feel like drawing up your future with three lines... I feel like torching your past as I erase you from all memories... I feel like cooking fancy dishes out of leaves and rubble... I feel like closing my mind's waking eye waiting for the the creepy chill of December who's late for this venue... I feel like burning every bridge behind me when I walk out the door... I feel like raising black widows for illegal racing... I feel like making amends to myself for what I lost that day, though I do not know how...

I feel like hearing you breathe slowly like you haven't since... forever. Tell me, what color are my wings lately?



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photo | *Vel.Thora*. Courtesy of the artist

DAN BL

NOX
SHOWCASE^{II}
ACKLODGE

NAME:

DAN BLACKLODGE

LOCATION:

MANCHESTER, UNITED KINGDOM

OCCUPATION:

PORNOGRAPHER, MUSICIAN, PRODUCER

WEBSITE:

LODGEWARS.BLOGSPOT.COM



photo | **Dan Blacklodge.** *Untitled.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. *Untitled*. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. Untitled.** Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Dan Blacklodge.** *Untitled.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist**



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photo | **Dan Blacklodge.** *Untitled.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. *Untitled*. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | **Dan Blacklodge. Untitled. Courtesy of the artist**

CHAI

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N-SPHERE MAGAZINE

ISSN 2068 - 620X

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