

MAGAZINE

ART / DESIGN / MUSIC / FILM
Volume One Issue Three

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Welcome to issue #3. Back on track after the delayed Issue #2, we return with another showcase of ideas to stir your thoughts. It's been a fruitful couple of months with some great contributions finding their way to us and a lot on the horizon too with the emergence of the inmo agency and plans for a plethora of extensions to the magazine. Nevertheless, there's already an interesting selection of parts waiting here to be added to and assembled into Issue #4 so as long as the summer heat doesn't burn out my attention span completely, we'll be back in no time with the next one. Please keep coming with the work/ideas/feedback and make sure you're on the mailing list to keep up to date on the coming developments. Enjoy!

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Project Co-ordination: Rob Lynam & Steve Sawyer

Art Direction: Inmo Visual Consultancy www.inmo-design.com

Thanks for your time: Rachel Whiting // Jim 'Proibly' // Max Leonard // Sri McKinnon
Dan Gibbs // Nathaniel Pearn // Laki 139 // Tom Lewis // Sarah Riddell // Davon Ramos
Benedict Lamdin // Russell Porter // Will Holland // ELPH // Mike Hirst // Tom Blackford
James Wyatt // EWO // Jody Orchard // Wouter Eising // Bas de Kort Kristian Peters

If you would like to contribute any work (design, illustration, writing, photography, etc) or get involved in any other way you can suggest, don't hesitate to get in touch by sending an email to mail@multilinkmagazine.com

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Proibly, could you start by telling us a little about yourself, your influences and inspirations, you have a background in film, why painting and graff.

For as long as I could remember I always wanted to be a comic illustrator. Spending years drawing anything and everything. Following british comics and any I could get my hands on from DC and Marvel. Having great art teachers growing up really gave me an appreciation of all art. I remember being given a copy of a street art video from way back with Mode2, Goldie and a few others. I couldn't believe there were people out there thinking and drawing and painting like me.

Somehow I ended up doing a film degree. For me my drawing was for myself. I didn't want criticism or grades for work I felt was personal to me. I spent a lot of time storyboarding and mastering many different drawing styles to try to find my own line style. I wanted to learn to animate and edit. But I really had trouble working to college briefs. After a few months in a music video company I decided it was a heartless industry to work in. About the same time I picked up a copy of scrawl collective and it just blew my mind, Mr Jago, Will Barras, Matt Sewell all with great lines and colour. It just gave me belief that there is a chance I could do it too.

In the time since quitting film my illustration has improved to a point where I feel proud and confident in the work I am producing.

You organize groups of artists into frequent 'Hookup' events around London, how did this come about and what generally happens?

It all started at cablestreet studios, a derelict warehouse way out in Limehouse, East London. It was a great space, empty walls and huge ceilings. I kind of knew a guy putting on events there and he was interested in getting artists to paint the walls. He had all these mad schemes and plans to make money which would never work and he turned out to be a real muppet. After a while of trying to blag an event for free with artists and some friends who have a damn fine sound system, I started asking people to come and paint. I asked so many people, most of whom didn't even turn up. I posted pictures on my account on fotolog, an online community for artists, and soon we had a big group of people who just wanted to get up and have a good day painting. It was a great day.

I have organized regular events since then with all my favorite people. I usually find a spot, post a few pictures of it empty and see who is up for it then let everybody know the date and how to get there. They just kind of happen. we have met some really great artists and every event brings a few more street artists out of the woodwork.

Is this why the Cablestreet Collective was started up?

It is really just a chance for everybody to get together and have a paint have a few beers and see some great work. Its better than an exhibition because it is all painted in a day - you see the blank walls then the finished piece. It isn't really for the public. It is more about creating a community and bringing people together without having to worry about taking down the exhibition at the end of the month.

What's planned for the future?

More of the same. I am always on the look out for a new spot to paint. These events will always be for the artists to get together and paint but we are also going to be putting together a few shows to get some exposure for some of the talented up and coming artists who paint with us.

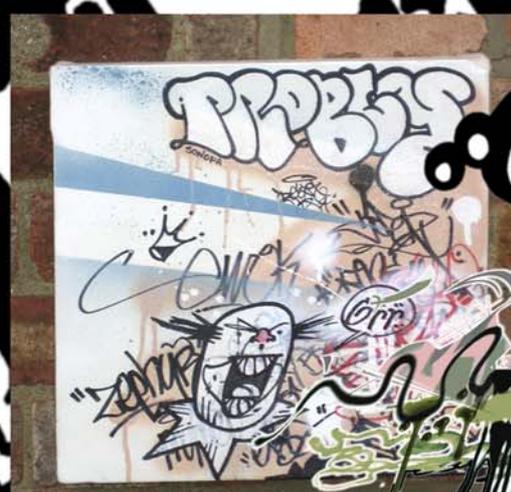
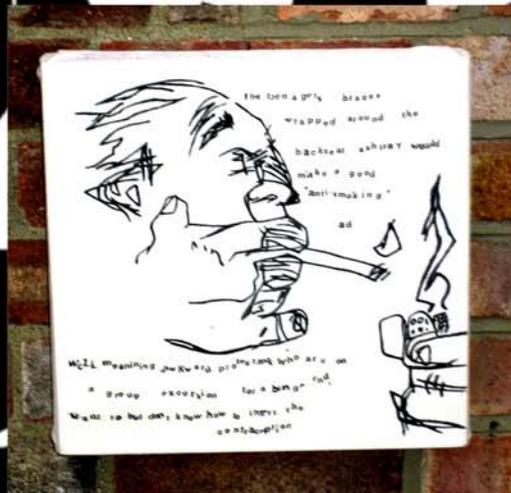
Any shout's?

You know I do. First of all i want to thank Steve and Sri without whom - I wouldn't be here now. I want to thank Mr Terratag, miz M, Emko, orfan, Mjar, 55, Jerm, Monster mantis, Kiko, muteid, red5, showchicken, Adam Neate, Waleska, pureevil, 54 crew, Blam, Ego, PMH, KMR, Eightbit, RichT, 45RPM, ESP, Dielooted and all the other artists who have come and painted.

www.fotolog.net/proibly

www.cablestreet.co.uk

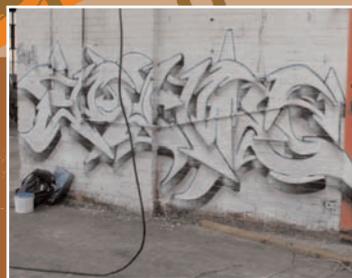




HOOK UP//

THAMES HOUSE // DALSTON

Words: Max Leonard



When I was a nipper I used to go round to my mate Ben's house where we'd climb over the back wall into a place we called 'the factory'. It was a derelict, ramshackle old warehouse and we used to climb over lorries, dodge broken glass, tightrope walk along girders, swing on stuff and generally break a few things. Sometimes we'd retire to one of the upstairs offices to sit on a matted brown carpet and watch older kids who, with hindsight, bore a frightening resemblance to The Cure, look at dirty pictures and smoke rollies in old armchairs. It was the site of all kinds of imaginary adventures, a place that adults didn't go, somewhere at once dangerous and safe. Some while ago I heard that it had been demolished and that the land was being used to build luxury flats. Thats progress, or so they say.



Recently, though, memories flooded back thanks to a man called Proibly, organiser of the monthly 'Hook Up'. It's an initiative sustained by the networking power of fotolog.net, a website that allows individuals to upload photos. In a canny use of technology it has been adapted to the needs of graffers, painters and writers as a free space to showcase their work. Hook Up turned this virtual community into concrete (and brick and steel) reality, gathering together the willing for a days communion to practise their art.



ROOM ONE

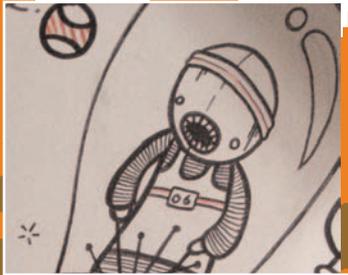


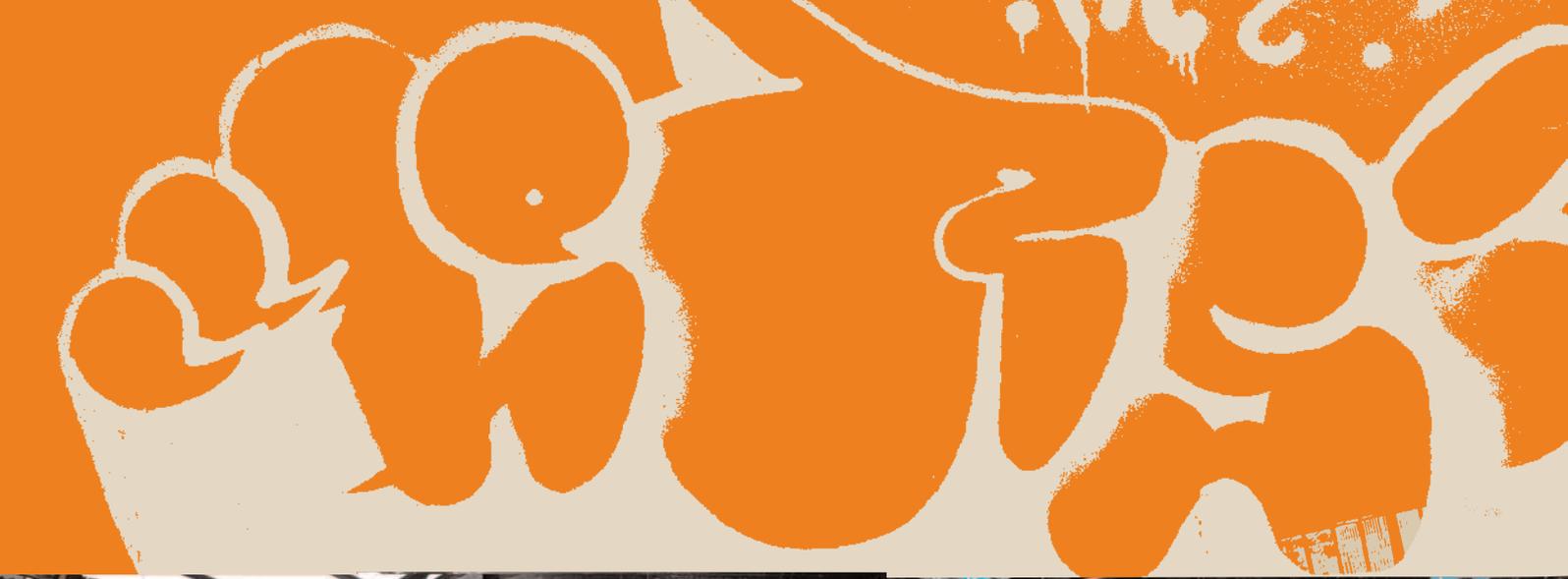
Anyone hopping over the fence at an abandoned truck depot in Dalston, the location of Junes meeting, would have been confronted by the best that 'edgy' urban decay has to offer. A cavernous space filled with the debris of years of disuse, it had clearly provided shelter to more than a few gentlemen of the road before a fire took out the roof and turned the inside out to the elements. Clambering over the accumulated rust and ash (and more asbestos than was strictly healthy) were a select few artists, among them Adam Neate, Emko, Ralph, Mjar, Jerm, Richt, 45rpm, Pmh, Dave and Ape, Thought Police, Kiko, monst, Philfy, Haruka, Sri, Lurb, Dbug, Busk, Skire, Above, Blam, Nostrings, Pheks, Bleach, Ebzke, Fybe, Herse, Mean, Patroucudo and Mister, eager to take advantage of the near-untouched expanses of painted brickwork that were the afternoon's canvas.



ROOM TWO







ROOM THREE



Under a louring sky that occasionally gave way to flashes of bright sun, peace and quiet reigned as everyone concentrated on the job at hand, like children deeply absorbed in a sandpit building sandcastles, occasionally emerging from their reverie to wander around, take photos and have a little chat. The event gave lie to the idea of urban art being destructive: the ugly-picturesque setting of tangled beams and charred remains gradually took on a new appearance as paintings flourished sympathetically in overlooked corners and blank walls. People used the environment to their advantage, hitting up the rusty trucks, old furniture and antiquated office equipment that were scattered around and about. The result, an exploration of a unique space; wandering round over the rubble was a surprising and unexpected journey. Larger pieces weren't overbearing thanks to the size of the space, and the small details tucked away in nooks and crannies took their cue from the best of street art and graphic illustration, a wealth of different styles and colours turning the depot into an adventure playground. A fry-up in the local greasy spoon rounded the day off. Onwards we go, in search for the next spot, so the imaginary adventures can recommence.



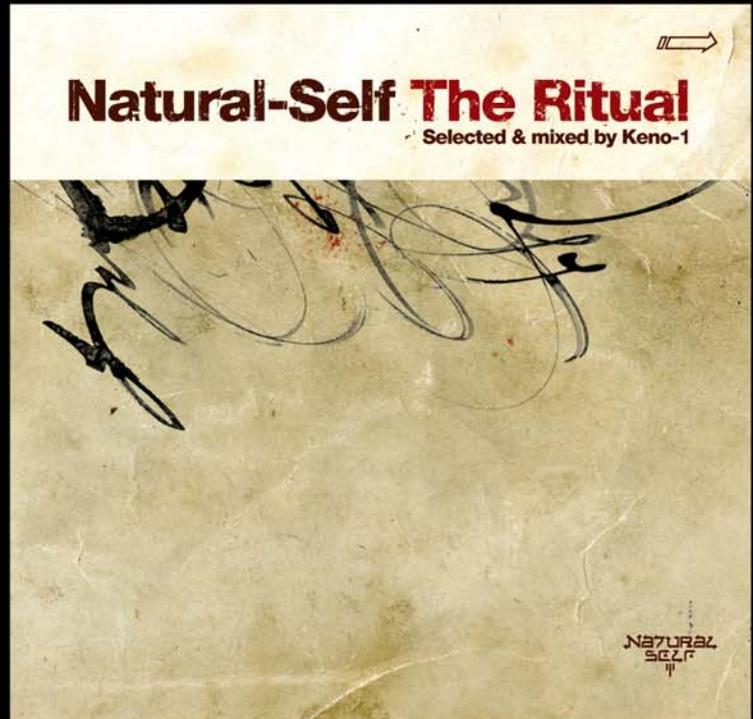
Music by Design

Interview with Natural Self

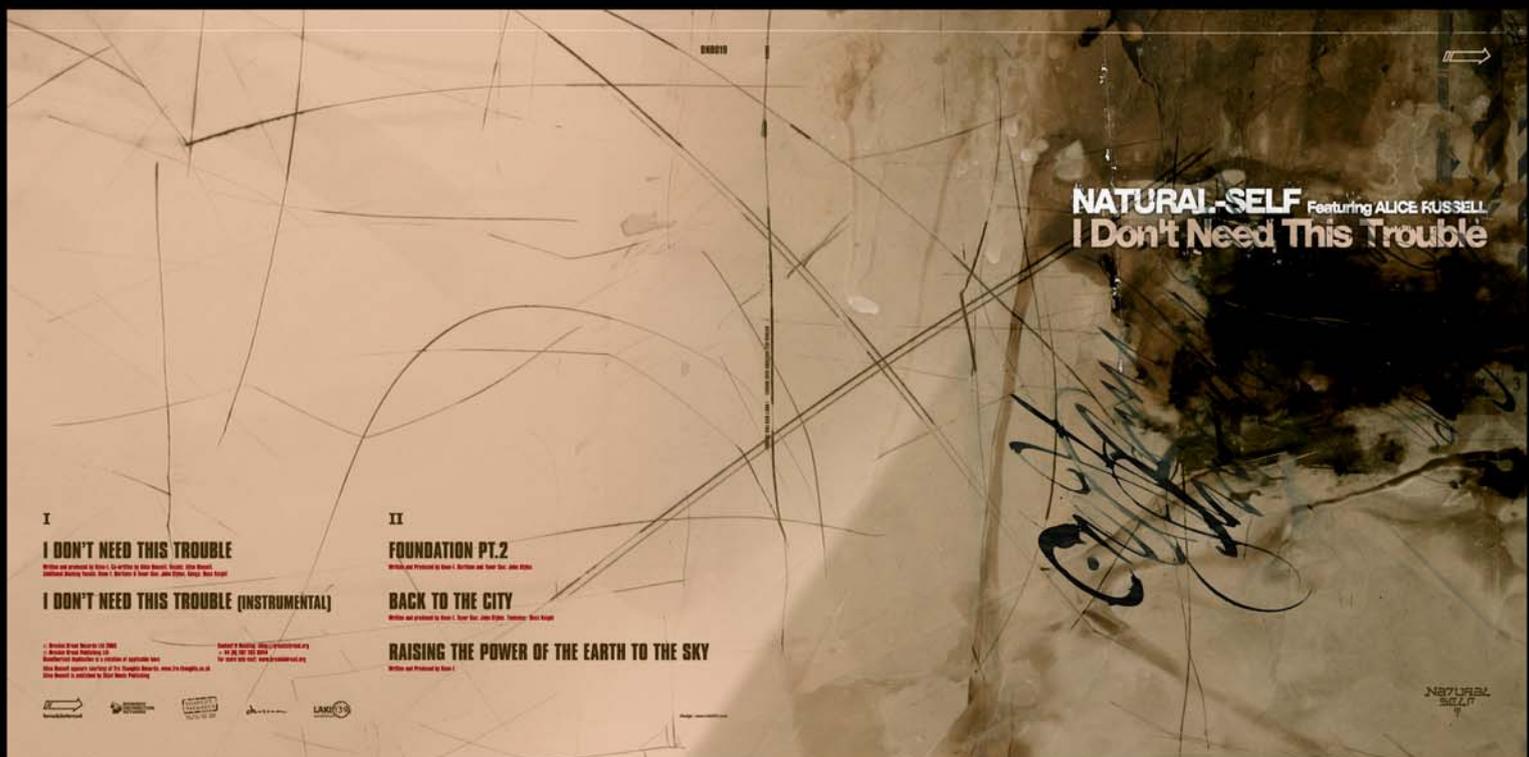
Words Max Leonard Design Laki 139

It's an idyllic summer evening and I'm sitting on a roof terrace with Nathaniel Pearn, the man behind the Natural Self moniker. Interrupted by the sound of engines leaving the local fire station, punctuated by mouthfuls of green tea and speculation on whether the girl who's watching us from her window while doing the washing up is cute (she probably is), Nat talks about his debut album, 'Let Peace Be The Ruler', forthcoming on Breakin' Bread, giving an insight into the development of the musical method that lies behind its loose, organic sounds. The album is heavily influenced by hip-hop, funk, jazz and Latin musical traditions, and combines hard, punchy horns, syncopated rhythms and surprisingly delicate instrumental parts woven over the top.

It's a result, he says, of thinking through his musical aesthetic before he ever committed any sounds to disk, out of a desire to get away from the wishy-washy 'trip-hop' sounds that followed in the wake of those pioneers of instrumental hip-hop – early Mo' Wax, Krush, Cam and Shadow – he still admires and counts as major influences: "I'd done a lot of thinking about making music before I started. I knew I was going to. I knew I wanted to, I knew I needed to, and so I gave myself parameters, self-imposed restrictions to try and intensify what I did, to make it more definite somehow, to purposefully fence myself in so as not to come up with anything too vague". What, then, was the magic formula that he alighted upon? "I put an emphasis on drums and percussion, in a kind of polyrhythmic way, to get away from a beat described by a kick and snare pattern – getting away, even, from a traditional drum kit. I thought it would be interesting to make music that was really dynamic but to have most of that dynamism expressed through the drums and percussion rather than through melodic structure," he continues. "The other really important factor for me was that I banned effects – so no echoes, no digital effects, you can't hear anything that sounds digitally manipulated. And it was strictly samples at the start, so no sound modules, no synths, nothing like that. Those were the rules. I thought hopefully this would create a style, rather than making up in my head a genre or a style to experiment with..."



Natural Self 'The Ritual' mix CD cover. Design LAKI 139



Natural Self 'I Don't Need This Trouble' EP cover - front & back. Design LAKI 139

NATURAL SELF

Natural Self logo. Design LAKI 139

Though he talks about limits and restrictions, really, he was making a choice, a process that in fact gives a definition, a focus. And as he's grown into his craft, he's branched out. As he became more confident, more sure of the groove he was carving through the fast, funky early releases he started to experiment with the recording process: "As I went along my ideas became more sophisticated, just through experience, really. I started realising the melodic ideas particularly were becoming difficult to express solely through sample-based means, so I started recording with other people, getting some talented musicians to do session work which I'd then edit, chop up, layer and arrange." Live saxophone, flute, guitar and Latin percussion (congas and timbales) are strewn throughout the tracks and the majority of the album is a combination of sample-based material and live recording, though early sample-only track 'Solomon' is the opener. So skilfully is it done, that the result is a seamless blend of live and sampled, old and new.

The broader canvas of an EP and the album has allowed him to interweave tripped out jazz – Pharaoh Sanders, Alice Coltrane and Eddie Gale – with his other influences, and it's as if he's gone back to hip-hop's ancestral roots, travelling the diaspora to find intersections between different places and times: "That's what fascinates me so much – that there's a connection between these things even though they might be made over a span of thousands of miles, or decades. You can have an American guy from a jazz background doing something heavily African influenced, or you can have an African guy playing the blues, or an English guy turning out heavy, heavy jazz stuff – like the Keith Tippett thing. It all joins up in my mind. I never know if other people hear that connection... But I'm trying to make them hear it." He mentions Keith Tippett in relation to his mix CD 'The Ritual', which veers towards the uptempo, hard and heavy funk sound before mellowing out at the end with the aforementioned meditative British jazz player and the tribal jazz reggae of Cedric Im Brooks. The mix effortlessly segues between old and new, incorporating some Natural Self stuff, which nestles next to a Nico Gomez tune – European Afro-funk music from the '70s – as if to prove the point of what he's saying.

Nat professes to feel at home at new label Breakin' Bread, and the mix certainly confirms his ability to rock dancefloors in a way that the best hip-hop DJs would be proud of. "I guess we just really liked each other's vibe," he says. "And they've given me freedom in the design of my records. This is the first opportunity I've had to have picture sleeves, and so get together a visual aesthetic to go with the music." This has initiated a fruitful collaboration with local artist and designer Laki 139. "The first thing he did for me was the new logo," says Nat. "I really liked my old logo which Art and Craft – one of the Museum members – did, but with the change in labels I thought it'd be a good time to freshen things up. Laki 139 was recommended by my friend Matt Sewell, the illustrator, and we've found it easy to work together. He developed this logo that I was really pleased with. And because that turned out so well, he'll be responsible for the entire look of these first few releases on Breakin' Bread."

There's clearly a lot of shared interests and points of reference between the two, which they manifest in their own ways and in their respective artforms. "Nat and I had long discussions about what we were into," says Laki 139. "We talked about everything from calligraphy to Blue Note albums, as well as Hebrew, Indian and Far East influences. Also, it was important for both of us that it wasn't too literal," agrees Laki 139. "We wanted to avoid the obvious trap of 'let's put an African drum on the front and slap some old text on it!' This led us down an earthy-coloured, old world, abstract avenue, and a focus on old scriptures."

"In my music," Nat continues, "there's a combination of crude and very fine, ornate elements, and that's definitely present in what he does as well. There are multilayered elements, an openness to influences and a fusion of the organic and the futuristic. Also, he's as obsessed with detail as I am – which is great because lots of people would get pissed off with me I think, if they weren't on the same tip!" Nat laughs. "But we're both perfectionists and can agonise for hours about letter forms and so on."

Laki 139 has given Nat a visual identity to match the ideas behind the music, stretching across all his new releases. But he also manifests his painstaking attention to detail and his intricate design in another of his current projects – AURA, a limited edition magazine featuring work from twelve artists with very different styles who've emerged from the traditional graffiti scene. Aside from the stunning layout, each copy of the first edition has been handcrafted, varnished and stitched, by Laki 139 himself, and features a unique cover. It's clear that the collaboration between Laki 139 and Natural Self is one not based on that off-repeated and meaningless truism – 'I was inspired by the music' – but stems from a meeting of values that one expresses in his music, one in his design.

As we sit and talk it grows dark around us, but as Nat's physical shape melts slowly into the dusk, his sense of purpose becomes ever clearer. He's got a vision of where he's going, and the routes he might take to get there, which will include learning an instrument or singing: "I guess I've started to feel a certain frustration, because as much as I love sample-based music – or music by design, if you will – I want to be able to express my musical impulse spontaneously." It's clear, however, that he's an artist with a distinctive voice that's a product both of the intellect and the emotions, and that he'll bring this thoughtfulness and aesthetic coherence to whatever he does.

Laki 139 is available for commissions and art direction. He's also looking for contributors to the second issue of AURA.

Breakin' Bread www.breakinbread.org

Laki 139 www.laki139.com

Museum Records www.m-u-s-e-u-m.com



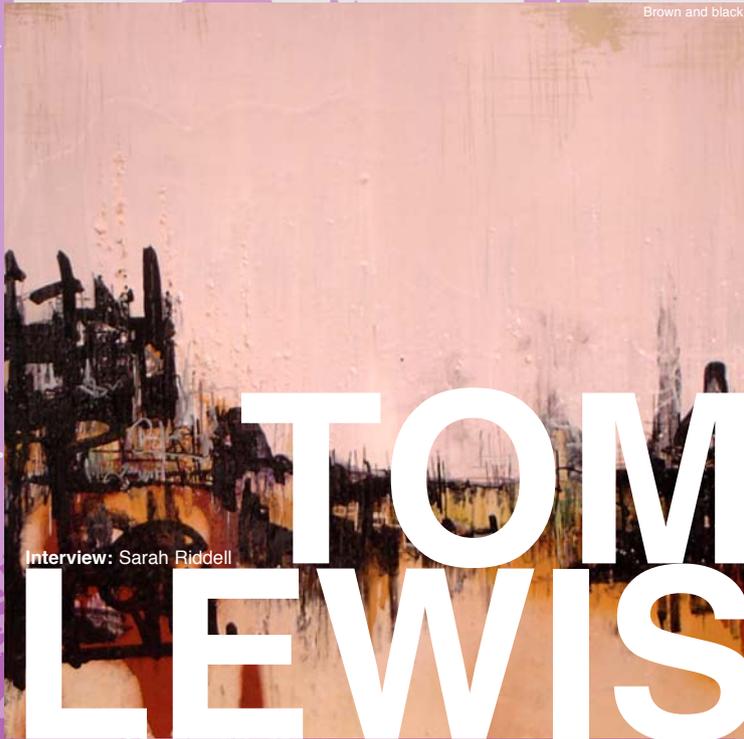
AURA Issue 1 poster. Design LAKI 139



Introduction pages for AURA 1. Design LAKI 139



AURA Issue 1, copy one. Design LAKI 139



Brown and black

Interview: Sarah Riddell

TOM LEWIS

It's 3am and, after a satisfying amount of vodka, Tom Lewis hands me a much-needed bowl of what is, arguably, the best damn chilli I've ever had. Though the food is appetizing, it is the artwork hanging proudly, yet unobtrusively, in his girlfriend's Birmingham flat that is the focal point of delicious goodness for the evening. Astonishingly modest about his work, Tom is finally persuaded to start talking about himself – more out of the necessity to shut my (ever so slightly intoxicated) ramblings up, than out of any trace of arrogance on his part. And so, we tuck in...

So, Tom, tell me what inspires your creative inclinations...

I'm inspired by being me. Ha ha! That sounds like my head is so far up my own arse. I mean, I'm inspired by BEING me, not being ME. Everything around me: films; animations; music; computer games; my environment; listening to people talking; the noise that wood pigeons make... (coo, cocoo... a really good noise). Aesthetically, I'm inspired a lot by the city and urban textures. I'm quite into the illegibility of a lot of graffiti – the really nice weighting and shapes of one spray can or pen that obviously meant something to the writer, but means something different to everyone else. I used to work in an art shop and would overhear people talking and just make up a character. You hear them say something ridiculous, and they're like a freak of a person, so it's really amusing and I develop that circumstance. You instantly have a picture in your head, and make up a whole story, without having to be involved in it.



Red and grey



Blue and pink

Your characters based prints and landscapes are quite different. Do you favour one over the other, is one more serious or are you still experimenting with styles?

The character stuff is just a different side to the paintings, but usually looks less 'serious'. To me, the big difference is the intensity of emotion involved. If a painting can be beautiful and lonely, that's quite a big emotion. If you just chuckle because Clive ('a boy in a skirt') is doing a silly dance, it's seen as being less powerful. But, if you're feeling lonely and then you chuckle, it's really powerful again. I'd say that if you were starting from the same emotional kind of bland point then the paintings were more serious, but it depends where you're coming from. I prefer painting. I experiment with lots of different things, but not consciously with style. I hope that will continue to evolve for as long as I am producing work.

You went to Middlesex University to study Fine Art. How did your attitude to your work develop throughout your time there?

All the way through uni I was having this big argument with my teachers because they were more concerned with reading into a piece of art and finding a finite, universal truth in it. I was frustrated that you couldn't discover a single meaning from a painting, because there is no such thing as universal truth. There are common themes that are familiar to everyone but you can't enforce that theme on someone else. There's so much information that makes up a person that it is impossible to understand what the artist is experiencing at the time. It's their whole human experience and a continuous stream of personal and public information that goes into it, as well as in the viewer's interpretation of it. You can read into a painting as much as you like, but there's no way of knowing

authorial intent, because you can't define who a person is. At the time, though, I didn't care about what it was, or meant, I just cared about what it looked like, a individual thought about and interpreted it, so I started painting the sort of stuff that was beautiful. I was having difficulty justifying my paintings all through uni. I wanted them to be purely aesthetic but couldn't argue my case. I thought that, as the viewer would not know what was going on inside your head when you painted it, why would it matter if nothing was? I got quite angry about it but, looking back, some of the paintings were shit. Then a really weird thing happened on a train and I became interested in how you interpret data and not simply about the aesthetic anymore. I understand now that when I paint I am trying to create emotive landscapes, and the techniques I use to create it are all part of the search to find the ever shifting 'answer' that is in my head.



Yellow 2



Diptich 1

A 'weird thing' happened on a train...can you elaborate a bit?

Yeah...I was on a train listening to my headphones, on my way back to London, and the atmosphere on the train suddenly went a bit strange. I turned my music off but kept my headphones on, so people would think I was still listening to it...

So they wouldn't notice you were observing them? Sneaky...

Ha ha...yeah. Anyway, I had my sketchbook with me so I started to write down everything that was wrong on the train. There was a man on my right with a big pair of winter gloves, even though it was summertime, so I wrote down 'gloves'. There were people behind me playing with dice but it didn't sound like they were playing a game, they were just rolling dice and cheering no matter what they got, so I wrote down 'dice'. Then there was a woman in front of me with a carton of Ribena; it was like a never-ending carton, she just kept on drinking it, so I wrote down 'Ribena'. And then there was someone to the left of me with a phone that kept ringing but they wouldn't answer it at all, so I wrote down 'phone'. Basically, I gave each letter a number and then added each letter value together, then divided it by the total amount of letters in each word to give an average letter value and it spelt 'help'. Then I did that with each individual word and rounded it up to a letter, which then spelt 'hell', which was fucking weird! A couple of days later I thought "right, I want to explore this a bit more", so I did the same with the things around me in my sitting room in Woodgreen, and it spelt 'monk'!

Certainly these words have religious inferences, is that why these incidents become so poignant to you?

Well, it was like a series of natural occurring elements that I had to read into and extract truth from. I'm not religious but it is fascinating how millions of people can experience different thought processes and still arrive at the same result. I became quite interested in the logic of Buddhism; the way you have little problems you're meant to solve and after you've solved them you're supposed to become more enlightened. Also, it was about that time that I started looking into alchemy at university.

Like the search for the elixir of life?

Yeah, yeah, it's just wicked. I thought it would be pretty cool to make the philosopher's stone for my final piece. The methods to make it are all hidden in pictures with special meanings and secret messages. Fantastic to look at and really interesting 'real magic' type stuff. Basically, you go through this big mystical route in the search for an ideal that is supposedly unattainable. Gradually, I realized it wasn't about the thing itself, but about the process. By the time you are in a position to make the stone, you don't need to anymore. There are similarities with Buddhism, meditating, and, in fact, most religious systems. The process is what's important, not the answer

What are you in the process of currently?

Some more large scale paintings, and lots of tiny ones. I've got some paintings in an exhibition in Scotland at the moment and I think Purple are going to start doing some prints of my abstracts, which I'm really excited about.

Is Purple your publisher?

Yeah, they're a publishing company that sell my prints. They saw some paintings in an exhibition - one of which was called 'Uncle Stilton takes a lover', which is an abstract with two nasty little characters on it. They liked it, so, I showed them some more character stuff I'd been doing and they said they'd like to do a deal. So we did a deal. At the moment the prints are literally in 'tens' of commercial galleries around the country, but Purple are aiming at hundreds - which will sound a lot more impressive when I'm trying to show off. Although that sounds like I'm being a bit too dismissive, I am really excited about it.



Pink 2

You've done a few cd designs for Apartment 26, Dharma Drive and a gift voucher for Hub. Are you interested in doing commercial stuff - 'fashionable' art - are you quite choosy about what you say yes to?

I really like projects. You know when you're at school and you get asked in English to make a newspaper front page? That was my best day ever. I love measuring stuff, I love drawing lines with a ruler and I love colouring in. Why am I not an architect? And I love maths (hence the word equations!). Really, why am I not an architect? Ultimately, I'm interested in creating things and that, for me, never starts with what I think will be commercial or fashionable but, usually, what I think will be cool, or funny, or beautiful. I've always been interested in the beauty of things...aesthetic beauty...how to even begin to interpret so much information and then define what is beautiful. If what I do turns out to be commercial then great, because hopefully it means lots of people like it (rather than it's cheaply produced). I am quite picky about what I say yes or no to, but I have in the past done character designs for a nappy...so my standards aren't exactly sky high!

What can we look forward to seeing from you in the future?

Well, Urban Outfitters were talking to Purple about commissioning some exclusive prints, some of which are being printed onto canvas waiting to be released. Don't know when that will happen, a buyer left and now it's on the backburner and blah blah blah. It's a bit upsetting 'cause I was trying not to tell people...caved in, counted my chickens, showed off, and now I'm a liar. Bigger. But, they look good, if I'm allowed to say that!

For extra helpings of Tom Lewis refreshment visit www.tomlewis.co.uk.



SLOTH ANGELES

INTERVIEW BY
NOSTALGIA 77

I FIRST MET
DAVON RAMOS WHEN WE WERE BOTH
STUDYING ENGLISH COURSES AT SUSSEX
UNIVERSITY, TUCKED IN AMONGST
THE ROLLING SUSSEX DOWNS ISN'T
THE FIRST PLACE YOU'D EXPECT TO
HEAR THE LAZY DRAWL OF A LOS
ANGELEAN NATIVE, BUT AS I WAS
TO DISCOVER RAMOS IS NEITHER
A LAZY CALIFORNIA DREAMER
NOR IS HE YOUR AVERAGE
HOLLYWOOD FILM MAKER.

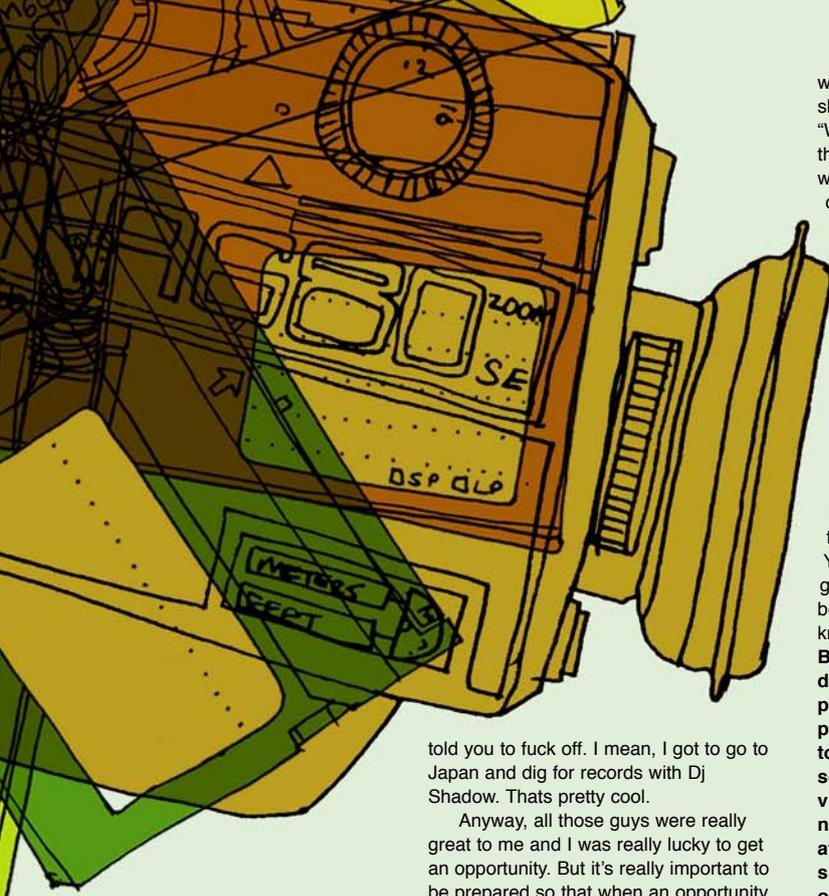
When we first met we shared an interest in digital arts of music and video and in the traditional forms of music and literature that informed them. DV Cameras and laptop editing were fairly new things back then - perhaps you could say something about the attraction of the new media at that time and how you feel it has developed as a creative technology and an art form.

After I saw the movie "True Romance" - that was it, I wanted in, I wanted to make movies. I went to college thinking I would eventually major in Cinema but when I got there I became very disenchanted in how movies were made. I didn't want to get caught up in all that "Industry" shit. I was at one of the best schools for Cinema (USC) but I ended up sticking with a creative writing major because I didn't want to be part of the Hollywood Machine and the System at Large.

Anyway, during my 3rd year at school I remember my boy, Saul Levitz, introduced me to Digital Video. I was like "Damn, this is some shit I need to get on." I realized that with this technology I could make movies and not have to deal with the whole Industry part. I could shoot it, edit it and distribute it (via the internet) by myself and that idea appealed to me. You didn't have to wait to get money and get a camera and lights- you just did it. So I bought a computer and camera and that was it; I was hooked. I started shooting and editing anything that interest me and I'm still doing that to this day.

The funny thing is that I am now, 6 years later, back in school and studying film and Cinema at the same Industry infested school that I swore off in the beginning: USC. Digital Video is a great tool and medium but I've learned that it's just that: another color to add to my palette. It is a great tool but I have come back and fallen in love with film again, even with it's complexity and added expense. There's just something beautiful and organic to it; kind of like playing an instrument over using a sample. They both get the job done but for certain projects you use one over the other.

But with all that said DV has a special place in my heart. It gave me an opportunity when I had none and it has really proven to me that anything is possible. I'm especially fond of this quote, I'm not sure but I think it's Godard who said it, it goes "Cinema will never truly be an artistic medium until it is as cheap as pencil and paper." Although I don't completely agree with it (I mean fucking Kubrick was definitely creating art) I think it says something about the nature of tapping into something on a level removed of the expectations of an industry and business. I think DV has really injected some life into the world of Cinema. Movies like "The Celebration (Festen)", "28 Days Later" and "Tarnation"



work. My dad still fucks with me, talking shit about what time I get up and so on. "Why don't you get a real job?" Shit like that. He doesn't realize who I'm working with and what I'm doing. And he's definitely not there when I stay up all night and edit 18 hours straight.

No ones there. So either you do it because you love it or you don't do it at all. People get weeded out in this business fast because you can tell when someone has the passion and just wants to do it. The others fall by the wayside.

So I forgot about the second part of the question. In preparation for these kind of jobs I recommend getting the strongest herb possible and getting blunted. I mean you can't really prepare for Behind The Scenes type stuff. You just go in there and mob it. You gotta stay spontaneous and flexible because it's life- go with the flow, you know what I mean?

Before the Hip Hop DVD's I know you did a variety of personally funded projects with both personal and political themes. With reference to some of these works is there something particular about film and video that lets you say what you need to about yourself and the world at large or is the medium always subordinate to the theme in any piece of work?

Growing up I always thought I'd be a writer. You know, Jack Kerouac and that kind of shit. And I love to write to this day, out of everything I do I get the most satisfaction out of a well written sentence more than anything. It's just cool and it has no rules. Then later on I really fell in love with music and to this day, deep down inside, I really wish I could be like you and be a musician (by the way, peep the collaboration between me and Nostalgia 77 on his first record). I've got loads and loads of records and am constantly inspired by music and the way a musician can perform and get into that groove where he's not even thinking about "Hey I should play this note after this note and take it to the bridge here..." It can be so spontaneous, which is beautiful.

So I guess what I am getting at is that Cinema kind of spoke to me because you could do all these things. It's really an amalgamation of so many different art forms and I guess that being involved with film has allowed me to never have to choose one art over the other; I just tinker with them all.

As far as themes go- I guess I used to be alot more interested in saying something specific whereas now I just want to tell a story and let the audience decide for themselves what it is saying to them. You know, for me it's really become about the process of making these things that gets me going. I love that feeling of being in the zone- shooting on the road with DJ Shadow or being on set with actors and working through a scene and it kind of gets to that point where you are just doing and reacting. It's kind of like that musician I spoke of before who's not really thinking through what he's playing, he's just playing what he feels. And that is what I love about these creative endeavors, getting into that zone where you're not really thinking about anything, you're just doing what you feel at any given moment and riding that out till the end. So for me, that's what it's about. The finished product is cool, the movie, the dvd, the album, whatever but for me, the thing I treasure most is that moment of creation, that time when you are so focused on doing something that everything else seems to fade away until it's only you and your instrument.

told you to fuck off. I mean, I got to go to Japan and dig for records with Dj Shadow. Thats pretty cool.

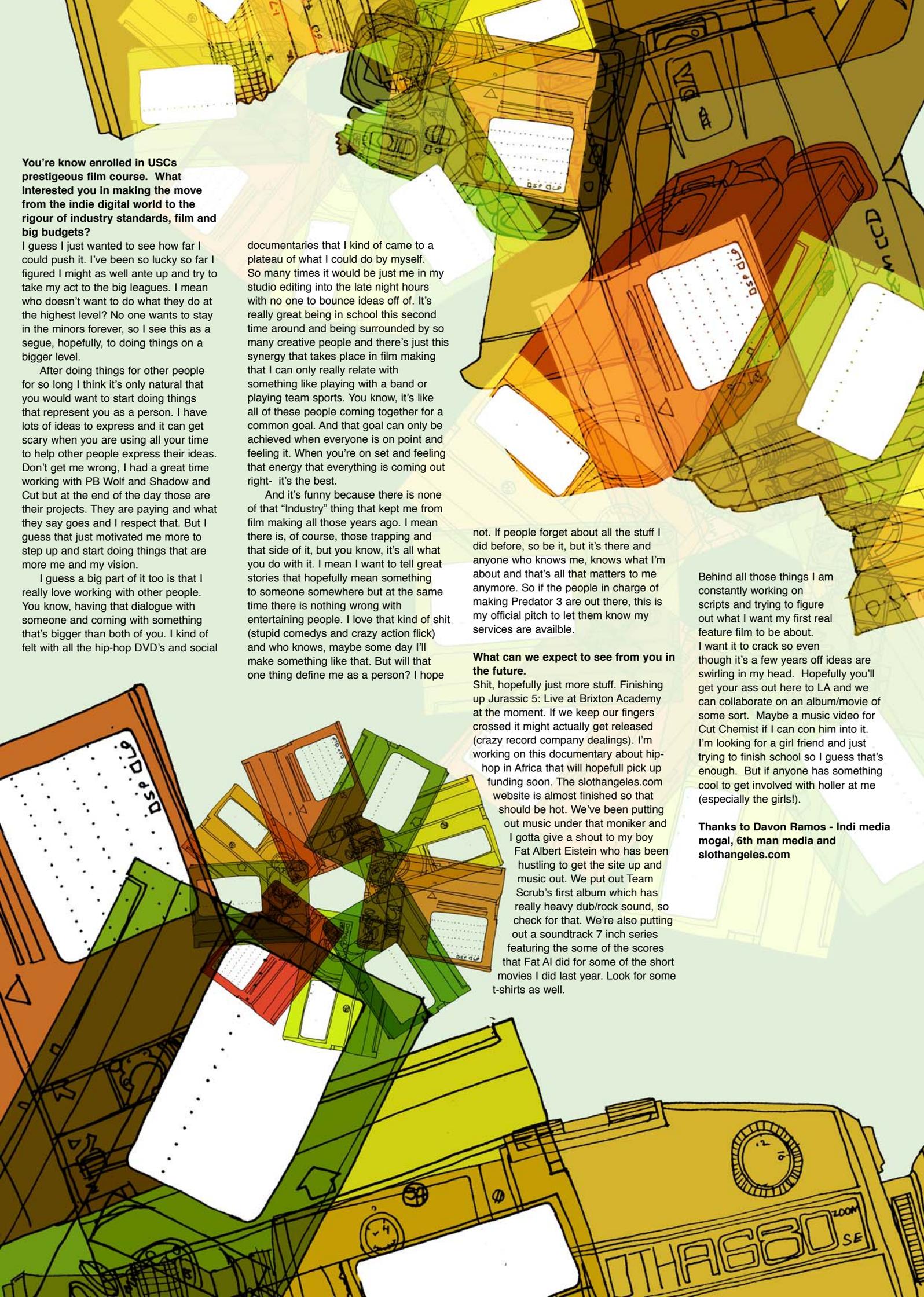
Anyway, all those guys were really great to me and I was really lucky to get an opportunity. But it's really important to be prepared so that when an opportunity arises you have the ability to take advantage of it. There were endless hours spent alone in my room editing and honing my skills just for myself, doing little personal projects here and there, way before there was even the idea that I could go on and do cool stuff and actually get paid for it. I mean that was always the dream but I never thought it would actually happen. Jurassic 5? Yeah, I had the record but never did I think that I would actually get to chill with these guys and get paid for it. So yeah, you gotta dream big but you also gotta put in the

couldn't have been made without DV and the fact that they were shot on video actually adds to the effect of these films. It's a harsher, visceral image and that enhances these movies in a way film never could.

If I'm correct some of your first commissions were documentary DVD's for California Hip Hop acts. You've worked with DJ Shadow & Cut Chemist, Jurassic 5 and the Stones Throw record label amongst others. Can you tell us how you got involved in this kind of work and how you approach this kind of project.

Dude, I got lucky. It's one of those stories where a friend of a friend knew someone who managed a hip hop group (in this case The Visionaries) and things just kind of took on a life their own. Me and some friends spent our own money following the Visionaries on tour, got screwed out of the post-production job (and subsequently any money) but were lucky enough that they were touring with Jurassic 5 who let us film a couple of their shows. This is when I was young and had some spunk, so I cut together some of this J5 show (for free) and took it over to their manager who dug it. One thing led to another and the next thing I knew I was going around the world with Dj Shadow and Cut Chemist. If you had told me that kind of shit would happen to me a year earlier I would have





You're now enrolled in USC's prestigious film course. What interested you in making the move from the indie digital world to the rigour of industry standards, film and big budgets?

I guess I just wanted to see how far I could push it. I've been so lucky so far I figured I might as well ante up and try to take my act to the big leagues. I mean who doesn't want to do what they do at the highest level? No one wants to stay in the minors forever, so I see this as a segue, hopefully, to doing things on a bigger level.

After doing things for other people for so long I think it's only natural that you would want to start doing things that represent you as a person. I have lots of ideas to express and it can get scary when you are using all your time to help other people express their ideas. Don't get me wrong, I had a great time working with PB Wolf and Shadow and Cut but at the end of the day those are their projects. They are paying and what they say goes and I respect that. But I guess that just motivated me more to step up and start doing things that are more me and my vision.

I guess a big part of it too is that I really love working with other people. You know, having that dialogue with someone and coming with something that's bigger than both of you. I kind of felt with all the hip-hop DVD's and social

documentaries that I kind of came to a plateau of what I could do by myself. So many times it would be just me in my studio editing into the late night hours with no one to bounce ideas off of. It's really great being in school this second time around and being surrounded by so many creative people and there's just this synergy that takes place in film making that I can only really relate with something like playing with a band or playing team sports. You know, it's like all of these people coming together for a common goal. And that goal can only be achieved when everyone is on point and feeling it. When you're on set and feeling that energy that everything is coming out right- it's the best.

And it's funny because there is none of that "Industry" thing that kept me from film making all those years ago. I mean there is, of course, those trapping and that side of it, but you know, it's all what you do with it. I mean I want to tell great stories that hopefully mean something to someone somewhere but at the same time there is nothing wrong with entertaining people. I love that kind of shit (stupid comedys and crazy action flick) and who knows, maybe some day I'll make something like that. But will that one thing define me as a person? I hope

not. If people forget about all the stuff I did before, so be it, but it's there and anyone who knows me, knows what I'm about and that's all that matters to me anymore. So if the people in charge of making Predator 3 are out there, this is my official pitch to let them know my services are available.

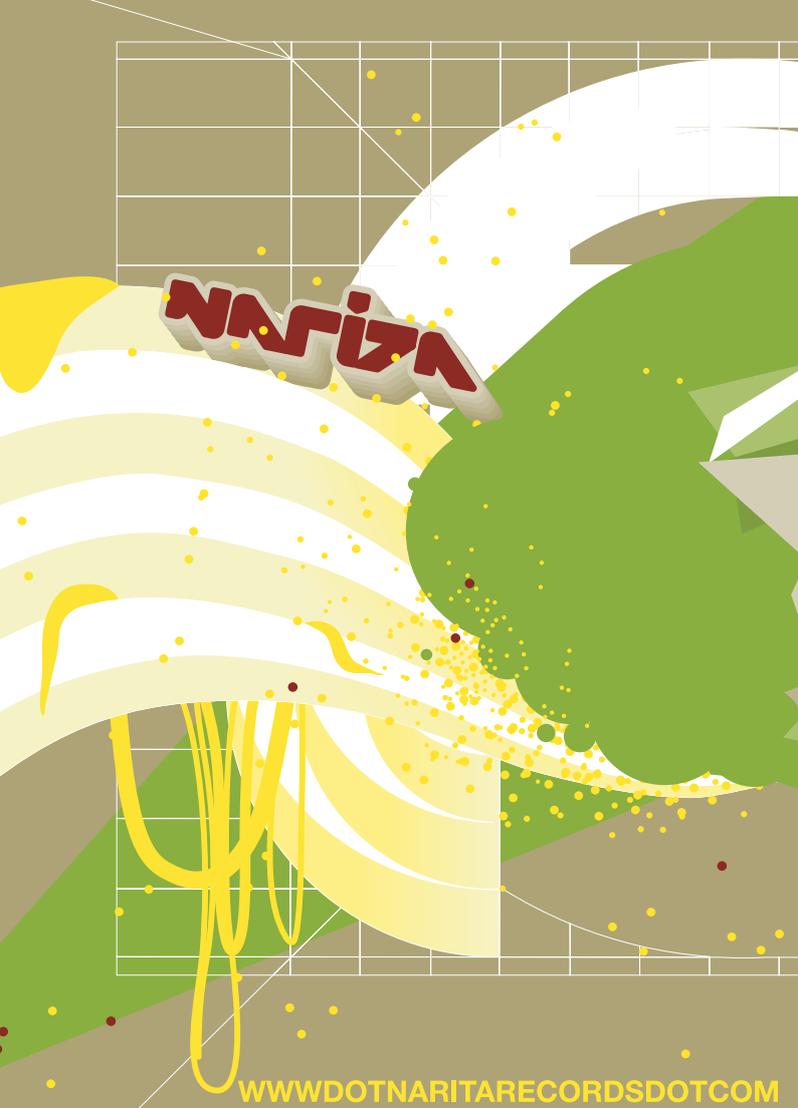
What can we expect to see from you in the future.

Shit, hopefully just more stuff. Finishing up Jurassic 5: Live at Brixton Academy at the moment. If we keep our fingers crossed it might actually get released (crazy record company dealings). I'm working on this documentary about hip-hop in Africa that will hopefully pick up funding soon. The slothangeles.com website is almost finished so that should be hot. We've been putting out music under that moniker and I gotta give a shout to my boy Fat Albert Eistein who has been hustling to get the site up and music out. We put out Team Scrub's first album which has really heavy dub/rock sound, so check for that. We're also putting out a soundtrack 7 inch series featuring the some of the scores that Fat AI did for some of the short movies I did last year. Look for some t-shirts as well.

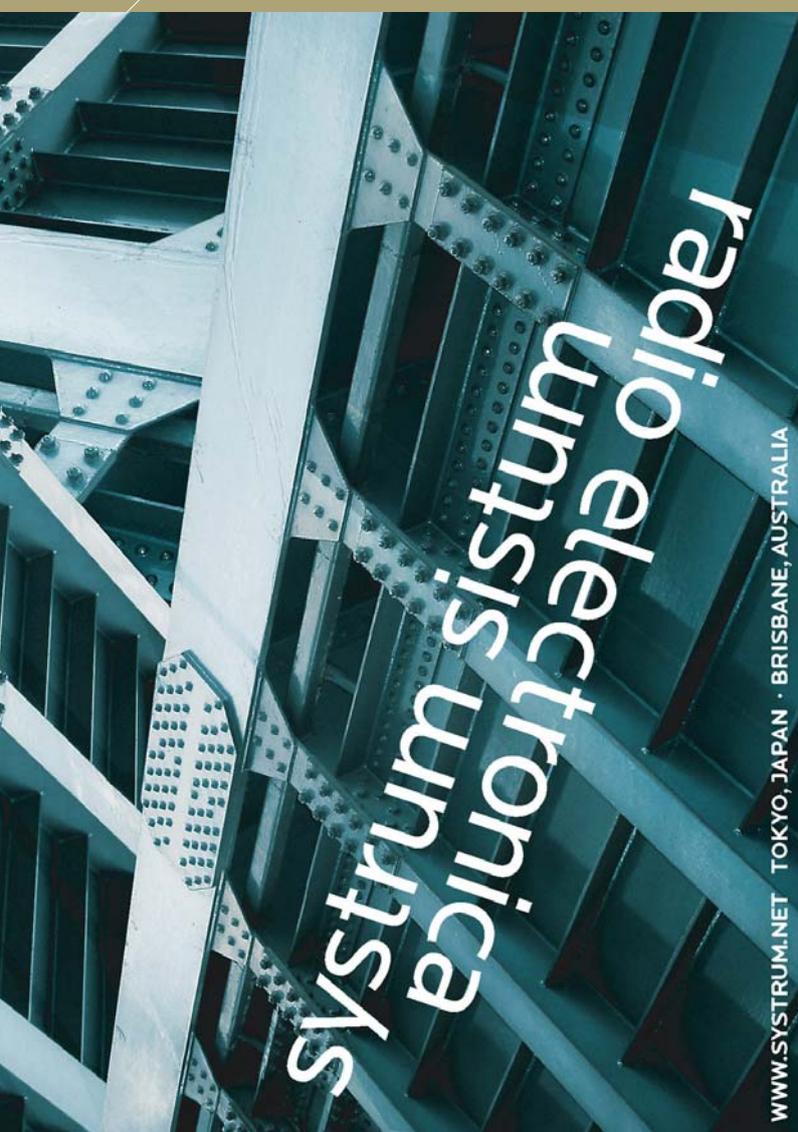
Behind all those things I am constantly working on scripts and trying to figure out what I want my first real feature film to be about.

I want it to crack so even though it's a few years off ideas are swirling in my head. Hopefully you'll get your ass out here to LA and we can collaborate on an album/movie of some sort. Maybe a music video for Cut Chemist if I can con him into it. I'm looking for a girl friend and just trying to finish school so I guess that's enough. But if anyone has something cool to get involved with holler at me (especially the girls!).

Thanks to Davon Ramos - Indi media mogal, 6th man media and slothangeles.com



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AURORA 2



Deru: Only The Circle / Benjamin Wyin / meideru.com
 Geomorph: To Preserve Intensity / Bryan Kunitzako / thisisnormous.com
 Sabi: Uri Reflection / Tony Peter Little / sabi.com
 Kattal: Goodbye In September / Reimer Eising / kattal.nl
 Sabi: Black Ink, Dancing In A Room / Tony Peter Little / saarecords.com
 Kattal: Times Of Running Eyes Closing / Reimer Eising / kattal.nl
 Max Spransy: The Lights In The Sky Are Stars / Max Spransy / maxspransy.com
 Blumström: Spring/Summer / Juho Heikala / blumstrom.com
 Capin: Nicot Arranger / Hunting Miller / capinmusic.com
 Twerk: From Brown To Green / Shawn Matfield, Vocals by Sindri / audbleedies.com
 Shapeshifter: Tranquil Vapor / Malcolm Goodman / music.columbia.edu/~shape

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Magnetic Fields

“Amid endless forests family trees stand, their branches laden with so many lifetimes; lifetimes which, like so many leaves, eventually fall to the ground and vanish into the earth”

Frances Potemkin, Collected Essays 1958-62

Words: Russell Porter

It was whilst enjoying a rare break in the sleepy village he had grown up in that William Holland, known better in some circles as Quantic, happened upon a shipping crate. Left in a riverside warehouse that had long since been abandoned the crate had refused to bow to the advancing years and still held tight its spoils. As he prized away the rotting lid and examined the contents within, William realised that the fates had conspired over the decades and were now offering him a glimpse into the long forgotten life of one of his distant relatives, Edwin Windermere Holland. The crate held a number of leather and canvas satchels stuffed with papers, letters, manuscripts, photographs and yellowed newspaper cuttings, a large wicker suitcase full of clothes, books and other such effects, a crudely fashioned acoustic bass guitar which had been riddled with either mice or bullets and a wooden box full of acetates and recording cylinders. After many hours spent poring over these relics, William began to piece together some of the incredible life his Great Great Uncle had led.

Born at the turn of the last century Edwin Windermere Holland, or Windy as he was known, grew up in the then prosperous inland port of Bewdley. He was a poor student but a keen banjo player; from diary entries it is clear that Windy obsessed about music, his insight into rhythm and melody for an Edwardian teenager was incredible. At the age of fifteen he decided to leave behind him the tedium of education and gainful employment, and headed downstream on a coal boat to Bristol. Taking the first opportunity available, Windy stowed away on a square-rigged sloop heading for Jamaica. He was soon discovered and put his banjo to use by playing sea-shanties to earn his keep. When finally they dropped anchor in Montego Bay Windy headed across country looking for other musicians. He met a group of fugitive plantation workers who had fled their evil captors to pursue a life of musical enlightenment in the forests surrounding Blue Mountain. Together they began to compose music that was both sophisticated and avant-garde; incredibly advanced compared to the mento and calypso that could be heard around the island at the time, The Sophistications (as they became known) blended Blues music with the rhythms and harmonies inherited by the sons of African slaves. The slow Boogie called “Feets And Hips” pre-dates the first Jamaican sound systems by at least forty years, yet it predicts perfectly the sound of all the Blues parties and lawn dances that were to come.

After many years of island life Windy began to long for England; a World War had passed, the British Empire had begun to crumble and he was anxious for the well-being of his parents. He decided once again to cross the Atlantic, this time on a Merchant Navy vessel headed for Southampton. The journey began in earnest as Windy worked in the galley preparing the sailors meals, and weeks of diary entries go by with little in the way of excitement. However, the entries stop around the time the ship should have been making sails through the Strait of Gibraltar, barely a week's passage to the English coast. What came next can, and probably will, be speculated on endlessly: Six months after his last entry the ship was found adrift in the Arabian Sea by the Pakistani Marine Guard, its cargo intact but its crew slain in the bloodiest of manners. The solitary survivor was Edwin Windermere Holland, who was described by onlookers as "wild-eyed" and "demonic". He charged at the officials wielding a large cutlass, but was soon overcome. Once sedated and secured he began to tell garbled tales of mutinies and Somalian pirates, of pitched battles with dark forces and of wicked omens. He was then charged with mass murder, certified and swiftly imprisoned in a high security asylum in the port of Karachi and there he lived out the rest of his documented days, arranging and conducting the prison band. Amongst the many acetates the Karachi Prison Band recorded "Put Some Grit In To It Parts I & II" is an edgy, neurotic affair, frantic in pace and instrumentation. Once again it seems that Windy pre-empted musical tastes by a whole generation: the recording date on the cylinder marks it down to 1954, a clear ten years and hundreds and thousands miles away from the deep funk explosion of North America in the mid 1960's.

When the asylum was condemned and shut down in 1972 those inmates thought to be too old to prove any threat to society were turned out into the streets. What happened to Edwin Windermere Holland will remain a mystery: the only clue is the receipt from the Mumbai Shipping and Freight Company. Whatever his last movements, Holland seemed keen to return his musical legacy to the United Kingdom. Thirty years on, thanks to the endeavours of his Great Great nephew and the Magnetic Fields imprint, the recordings of Edwin Windermere Holland's life of musical adventure have been lovingly restored. The first two 7" instalments are now available for all to enjoy.

www.magfields.com





Interview: Sri Mckinnon

How long have you been sketching/drawing/painting and when did you begin incorporating stylised lettering and characters to your Black Books?

I started drawing/painting at the very end of 1999, but became more serious around 91-94, developed letters and studied styles, then met other writers with similar style interests who were highly influential for me.

The name came about from a teacher at my primary school who read us Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit back to back over 2 years every day. I thought the elves were the coolest.

How would you define what you do? Do you foremost perceive yourself as an artist/illustrator/graphic designer/animator/graffiti artist or all of the above?

At the moment, I kind of do a bit of everything, mainly still 2d drawings, but some websites in flash and basic animations, I worked full time at a graphic design company called 16k until fairly recently when I got back into painting a bit more seriously. I've been lucky to try out lots of different things.

What do you site as your principal influences or sources of inspiration and whose work do you most admire?

I'll be quick with the influences, because I have loads, but one's that always stand out are: MieOne(MSC), who was kind of like a style instructor and good friend. Who founded Many Styles Crew The Fallen Angelz, who were doing a lot of mad work when I started. Bernie Reid, a great artist and influence to this day. Mode2, a genius of sorts, whose work also has an observant narrative that can connect with many people. Delta Inc, his stuff was far out when I first saw it, and now it's even further. Yalt Inc, his letters are the funk. Also a big influence. Elk PFB, you could write a hundred books about that guy, from being one of the most up London writers with a hardcore looking style, he developed his letters into fun looking Old English wildstyle, that was so different that people were freaked out by it. It was likened to the new European styles at the time, but it was definitely from his own train of thought, plus he caned everywhere he went. Sento TFF, when I saw his stuff I didn't know what was going on, it was like 4 pieces stuck together with some mad cartoons put over the top, his stuff was so robust and technical, but fun too.

I like a load of other graffiti writers, I could go on and on, but these guys kind of set up my style. Artist wise again the list could be massive, but I suppose Juxtapoz magazine would be a good reference early on for the Lowbrow art scene. Guys like Glen Barr, Derek Hess, Doze Green, Twist and Phil Frost. Again doing head exploding work that looked amazing and still had a load of attitude.

AKAELPH 2005
SEASON FIVE

MANY STYLES
LOS VAMPYRS

The one changing thing for design was seeing a talk by David Carson in Glasgow, he made me realise that graphic design was changing in a way that it wasn't for cokeheads with haircuts and sportscars anymore and it was easier than ever to design typefaces, fliers, etc.

For putting up artwork in the street, it has to be Adam Neate really, I met him at the Unabomber exhibition at the Custard factory in Birmingham, and he turned up with a truckload of artwork. I asked him where he stored it all and he said he left it on the streets. I couldn't comprehend putting that much work into something and leaving it on the street, but after a while I started to play around with the idea and did some posters, which turned out to be good fun.



What is your opinion about the assimilation of graffiti and street art into mainstream popular culture and has this affected your perceptions to it?

I think graffiti writing has been in popular culture for years, I suppose now, it really is in everything from mobile phone graphics to car adverts to trainers. I suppose at the design studio these days they have the street art filter they put the campaign into, 'Yeah Bobby, we gotta go 'street' on this one'. I think the recent reincarnation of street art has changed to become a lot more acceptable as it's more character/object/logo based and therefore is easier to digest by Joe Public, where graffiti writing was letter based and wasn't inclusive which was originally the appeal. I think the debate could go on forever really. I like parts of both really.

You have established a very distinctive and individual sense of style with your central character being an endearingly hairy and oft goggled, whiskey-nosed type of fella! Where did the idea for this character originally stem from?

It's sort of a childhood obsession with alcohol and alcoholics! sometimes I'd have to go to the boozer with my dad, when I was a kid, which was cool, because he'd get bevvied and I'd play pool, the men would chat about man

You seem to take a very varied approach in your use of materials; building up painterly textures using all aspects of pencil, oil pastel, acrylic paint and aerosol as wellworking with computerised vector images and animation. In which medium do you feel most comfortable?

I prefer working in pencil on paper, years ago it would have been spraypaint or markers maybe, but pencil is what I like these days.



stuff, swear a lot and get really drunk. Drink driving was still legal in the 80's so it was pretty mellow. My dad works in construction and has been on the road since he left Derry when he was 16, so his mates were all old haggered boozemongers, they looked always pretty happy, but alcoholism fucks people up, I like getting drunk, but some of the health problems these guys have is quite depressing, but the job they do is shitty too, so the bevvie balances it up. I could never do a weeks work with my dad, I'd die I think.

How important is the ideal of concept in your personal work or do you just freestyle until you find a trick that works for you?

I usually start at the page of my sketchbook with nothing and start to draw, and usually the ideas come out, if I try too hard to think of stuff I don't get anything out. I sometimes go with news events or current affairs, my mate Bryan Clarke whom I go screenprinting with, always prints fairly topical work, you can see his stuff at www.krisis.org.uk

Any final words, props or shout outs? What can we next expect from the world of Elph?

Cheers for doing the interview! hopefully soon I'll update my site akaelph.com and get some new screenprints on the go, I've been working with Dist on the new version of the Harmony site which is cool. Also with Analogue books, I might do some new stuff, I've been helping them with the Running Amok website which is cool. Hopefully going to do some more work with the guys from The Outside Institute, who were really decent dudes. I gotta say cheers to Problly for being my East London tour guide when I went down, and also to Dave the Chimp for the Sunday doodle session. Closer to home The Many Styles CompaOeros Mie, Sole, Aser and Yolk. Also KSM, the young team. Last but not least my wife Hels and Oscar the cat. I'm sure there's tonnes of stuff live left out, but I'm sure that's enough for one person to read!

www.akaelph.com

www.16kdesign.com





SPOLLING LIKE KINGZ

Words: Mike Hirst

I currently have the great honour of living within that world-renowned cultural pearl of a town; Swindon. Obviously you will have heard the familiar tales of how it is at the forefront of the global cultural and creative movements, about the celebrities enjoying the sophisticated surroundings and the wannabes who swarm about attempting to look glamorous yet who always seem to fall short, thwarted by their transparent desperation to warm themselves in the glow of publicity. It can be a strange life, much like I imagine living in Vegas would be, an existence where one is accustomed to finding oneself elbowing aside minor royalty in the January sales – and I am equally accustomed to being accosted by people desperate to move here, desperate to find a way in – willing to take a job in any one of the literally hundreds of upmarket wine bars which litter the town in the hope that they will get discovered whilst working and get their big break.

It's a strange place and I usually tell them as much, try to give them a sense of perspective about it all, but that is hard to do in a place where even the architecture oozes promise. Mile after mile of gloriously crumbling concrete, uniformly functional and efficient, linked by glittering vistas of patchy brickwork – it is a sight which would have made Keats himself stop in his tracks and declare more marvellous than even those green fields he'd previously been so fond of! How can one convince people that Swindon falls short of its towering reputation when they only have to open their eyes to see what has been described in "functional living" magazine as "perhaps the most stirring sight on the planet, a cascading wave of beauty rolling, jewel-like up to the scintillating backdrop of the surrounding hills".

So it is true that you don't have to be a celebrity or world glitterati to enjoy the riches that Swindon has to offer; everyone is well catered for in Swindon, from the smart workers wearing the latest and most fashionable suits, to the achingly hip pub goers who simply adore the irony of going to chain pubs in an elaborate "anti-cool is cool" bluff, Sports fans can enjoy the nerve-jangling drama of ten-pin bowling, or a fast-paced game of pool, whilst home lovers can subscribe to the wonders of satellite television. Thrillseekers can even go to the cinema, which has a vast screen bringing Hollywood to Swindon's door, and go – if they dare – on a nerve-jangling adventure to see a frightening film. As you can clearly see Swindon is a kind of land-locked island paradise for everyone and deserves its place in peoples hearts as the ultimate utopia, the kind of place which every other place strives to resemble: a veritable barometer of mankind's great achievements to date.

Sadly, although any sane and well-adjusted inhabitant of Swindon would be right to expect an extremely long life ending eventually in a peaceful death (due to excessive happiness), not everyone is the same and it is a universal rule that there will always be some "wrong 'uns" in any society. Shockingly even the home of the "bright young things" is no exception, with many deviants being fanatically unmotivated by financial gain and diverting their energies towards unprofitable activities as "listening to live music" in one of the various proletariat establishments. Shockingly a hardcore few go even further, engaging in undesirable pastimes such as breakdancing, graffiti writing and skateboarding. Obviously the town, conscious of its' reputation, has done everything in its power to encourage these people to stop including giving a blanket refusal to provide any facilities for them to engage in their strange activities but this has unfortunately had no effect on them – indeed it only seems to spur them onto greater efforts, and they seem almost proud of the way they have had to defy all the odds to carry on doing what they clearly love so much.

This grim tale of deviancy only gets more sordid when one realises that these people are not purchasing the clothes which some of our more esteemed merchants have designed for their demographic. Major launches, involving world-renowned "hip" young artists, have been held to attract these youths' attention whilst the budget lavished on expensive street surveys to determine what the youth like has totalled many millions of pounds – yet they are still not buying the clothing which was so carefully targeted at them. This shocking lack of spending is clearly spiteful and, worse, some of them have virtually declared war on Swindon's good traders by cold-bloodedly designing their own clothes and selling them to their fellows.

The most clear example of this is a company called Rolling Like Kingz. This company was brazenly formed by a group of skateboarders, graffiti writers and b-boys – people who were used to having to create a scene for their own activities in the shadows behind Swindon's bright lights, and so were used to being independent and doing their own thing. These people laughably suggested that they would know what their peers would like better than our beloved major labels would, as they were active in their chosen pastimes – and proceeded to make the even more ludicrous suggestion that practicing graffiti writers might be better at creating designs for the clothing than a highly trained team of 40 year-old Eton-educated designers working at one of the major couture labels who's closest brush with graffiti occurred when they had to daub "private parking bay, no blocking" in precise block capitals on their garage door.

Obviously this is a ridiculous concept; a clothing label with original designs by graffiti writers, with a large range that includes many unique hand-made items could never work. Huge and very impressive companies have spent a small fortune creating an image for anyone engaged in unusual activities such as the ones the people in RLK are engaged in – and it is folly to suggest that anyone would dare to look unique after the media onslaught they've subjected people to! It is therefore for comedy purposes only, to give an insight into the mentality of the sort of people who think they can successfully take on the big corporations, that I'm finishing this with an interview with one of the people behind the company;

So, firstly, what made you start designing clothes? Was it a specific plan or did it happen by accident?

It actually came about quite by accident. Some of the people who later came together to form RLK were making their own clothes for fun, just to look a bit different really, and soon found that people were coming up to them and asking where they could buy them just because they really liked the designs. After this had gone on for a while, a few of us decided to pool some money together and put it towards making a limited run of t-shirts which sold out quickly enough for us to realise that there was sufficient demand for designs like ours to carry on going, so RLK (Rolling like Kingz) became a company and we've never looked back since.

Why do you think these people liked your designs in the first place – I understand the first clothes were sold on the strength of the designs alone rather than the quality of the materials?

We never intentionally set out to market our clothes; people honestly started coming to us and the demand basically created the company. The real difference in our designs is that they are created by real, and very talented, graffiti artists and not by designers – people could see and appreciate the difference. The idea behind RLK was to create something that would produce clothes for people who are either involved, or interested, in skateboarding, graffiti and breakdancing. Too many companies market their products towards these people without having a clue about the culture or indeed what these people like. As RLK is solely made up of people actively involved in all three of these disciplines, we feel we have our finger on the pulse of urban culture and so are better able to make the clothes which people would like to wear.

Is the quality something you're going to be working on in the future then?

We decided after our first "range" that we wanted, above all, people to be happy with the clothes that we make – we wanted them to look good and last as long as possible, so that people get good value for money. We therefore sourced the best quality materials for every stage of the process, from the clothes themselves to the printing materials for the designs – it makes the clothes a little more expensive but it's worth it for the durability and ensures they will be up there with the best on the market.

Surely Urban culture changes very fast – do you have any ways of keeping up with what is going on?

We're a big part of what is going on! RLK has teams of talented skateboarders, b-boys and writers who are up there with the very best in the country, attending events and entering competitions around the world; the team members obviously have to be happy with the clothes they're wearing, so everyone sits down together to work on designs (which the graffiti artists translate into the finished product)

Is the goal to mass-produce your clothes in the future then?

One of the reasons our clothes appeal to people is that they are relatively unique, and this is an important part of their appeal – there is nothing worse than bumping into someone else wearing the same clothes as you! We've concentrated on producing our main clothing lines in many different designs and colours, to avoid duplications, and additionally have started hand-making custom pieces of clothing and hats to provide something truly unique for those who are after something a bit more special.

What kind of clothes do you make?

We make full ranges of T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoody's, Caps, Beanies, Longsleeve tops (in various styles) and girls tops (again in various styles) – basically any item of clothing for the top half of your body which we make in all colours and in any of our designs. We additionally have got hand-made ranges of hats and coats, and can custom-make clothing to your specifications if we are given enough notice.

I assume the plan is to make a pile of money and disappear into the sunset arm-in-arm with your bank manager?

Not at all! The major reason we decided to start the company was that we could see that too many clothing companies are producing clothes without putting their heart and souls into it – they are thinking about their profit margins first and the clothing second. We feel that it is far more important to concentrate on the clothes – we want people to enjoy them – and we also to put something back into our own scenes as skateboarding, graffiti and breakdancing do not receive much support or understanding from the wider community and so need all the help they can get. These are our main priorities, and hopefully if we concentrate on these then the business side will eventually take care of itself.

How can people obtain your clothes – I understand that they're not stocked in many shops?

We're working on that now and our clothes should be appearing in selected shops fairly soon – these will be shops which fit in with our ideology of producing a good product rather than ones which adhere to more traditional corporate values; ie. smaller shops who care about their customers.

In the meantime we are in the process of creating a website at

www.rollinglikekingz.com

email: therealrollinglikekingz@yahoo.com

or if this fails please email: alsopanda@yahoo.co.uk

Do you have any final words for anyone who has read this far?

The main thing we have to say is that it is time to take some control back from the corporate companies, to let the people involved in the UK hip-hop scene have a say in their own scenes rather than let the big companies dictate what should happen. We are there for who is trying to make a difference, to support the ones who are really trying to make something happen – please give us a call if we can help in any way.

Finally, RLK owes a huge debt of gratitude to all those who have helped them out so far (there are far too many people to mention and thank here: you know who you are) thanks a lot!!



Plexiphonic

Words: James Wyett

Plexiphonic have an array of creative outlets, all related to founder member Ewo's love of electronic music. Their main connection to the world is via Plexiphonic.com. We took some time out with Ewo, creator and curator of Plexiphonic to discover a little more about them and what they do.

Ewo explains "For me Plexiphonic represents all that I love about music. All things related to music are what keep me going. My relationship with electronic music goes further than that of a passive listener. The emotions I feel when I hear a great track become a kind of obsession. Sometimes I have to go back and listen to that same tune all day. The only way I can be free of this is to reinterpret my emotions into a visual medium. I listen, I feel, I see, I create".

After spending many years painting she discovered the wonders of digital video and decided to trade in her brushes and paint for the computer and camera. "I have been experimenting with paint and photography for over ten years now. I describe my video works as a compulsive need to express my emotions, it was not long till I tired of the static mediums in which I was used to working and got hold of a video camera. This was a logical progression for me, adding a certain dynamic to the mix but more importantly, giving me the ideal opportunity to relate my artwork, to my passion for electronic music".

From this love, Plexiphonic was created. Attempting to construct something tangible from her passion for music and visual arts. It wasn't enough to be a casual observer. She needed to immerse herself in the medium.

Plexiphonic receive help and influence from many people. Ultimately however, everything comes down to Ewo. "It is a very personal thing, I like to keep it very close to me. I don't want to rely on a particular scene or group of people within a network". Ewo has very clear objectives on what's achieved with any Plexiphonic project and admits that "In the end, when some things don't work so well, I want to be in a position where I only have myself to blame...".

With regard to the Brussels music scene "We don't see a lot of international music artists, especially not on the electronic music side of things, I wanted to present my favourite artists to people and give them a chance to play" This is how the event "Electronic Disturbances" in February 2004, (which included a live set by the UK's Multiplex and visuals by Ewo) came into being. "I wanted to reach people with the music I am passionate about. That's kind of what started Plexiphonic. It seemed the natural thing to do".

"Electronic Disturbances" attracted around 700 people which completely surprised Ewo. She attributes a lot of this success to the fact that an event of this type had not really been staged in Brussels before. Another possibility being, "Recently, I have seen

a serious lack of self awareness with artists and labels. I don't want to sound elitist in any way, but I really miss quality in electronic music being played live. With the events we organise I expect the artists that are invited to give their best, and I try to create the conditions for them to do so".

Ewo believes that ultimately the events are for the artists, and she attempts to make them feel as comfortable as possible. This includes accommodation in her family home, rather than in an impersonal faceless hotel. Hoping they will all leave at the end of the weekend having enjoyed their experience of Brussels.

Other Plexiphonic live events have included appearances by artists such as Kettel, Tim Koch, Bauri, Kelpo and Loden to name a few. Hosting a label night for the outstanding Expanding records is penned in for the future. "The events have really been received well. I am happy to see that there is now a small following growing in Brussels. That gives me the energy to continue with what I'm doing. I love that people ask me when the next event will be. It helps with the motivation to bring a wonderful experience again".

Much of the Plexiphonic output to date has been of a visual nature. Examples of the videos, most of which are aesthetically lush and introspective, accompany a wide variety of tracks. Among them my personal favourites Nautilus' "888" re-titled "Zovex", and a reworking of an Ontayso track by Loess titled "I thought that it existed only in dreams". All of which are available to view and download from the site.

When being visually creative, inspiration is drawn from sound first." music is always the main guideline for me. That is how I visualize the mood and atmosphere of the piece. I may also work the visuals around the musical accents and structure of the composition. It depends if the content of a video is the most important part. By content I mean in the way that the images resemble something that people can easily reference, as opposed to more abstract images where people might be guided by feelings from the shapes and forms".

More recently, a lot of time has been spent in the creation of music. But she states quite clearly "Making music doesn't mean that the visuals are on hold. One thing certainly doesn't exclude the other. I am still working on visuals right now. The music is just something that I love to do, it just came naturally to do tracks right now". The fruits of this labour have been realised in Ewo's first net release, the ethereal "Greetings From Tuskan" ep, available for download from the Plexiphonic site. "I have been creating music for a relatively short time now, but for me it was a logical step a bit like coming full cycle".

Ewo started listening to electronic music at around age 14. Weaned on classical music, citing influences such as Gabriel Faure, and a love generally of the Baroque and Romantic period. She found herself intrigued by the use of machines and computers to express human emotions.

The first real hit on the head as far as electronic music is concerned came after hearing Gescom's "Key Nell". "That made me really see that electronically created music can be emotional. I found things that I love in classical music in my new discoveries. It all had a very strong emotional content in my opinion. With a lot of artists you can hear that they were completely into the sounds and music, and that the music is referential to itself and the artist, not to scenes and little rules of genres".

With the recent release of the "Greetings from Tuskan" ep and the forthcoming collaboration with Eat This records to release Loden's "Valeen Hope" album. Does she see a part of Plexiphonic's future as a label? "Well, that's kind of growing, like the events did. It's my plan to bring music to people. And yes, that will also mean more releases. Whether they are net-based or hard copy, depends. I truly think that some music needs to be on CD or vinyl; other music is good for a net-release. Net-releases are a perfect way to spread music fast. But I've just had 2 releases, so maybe all my ideas about that will change. For now, Plexiphonic as a label is certainly an option. But the idea is not to just release music and then say "bye-bye" to the artist. I want to plan and promote properly, hopefully helping them to spread their music. The artist must understand what I do and my plans. Artists come and play, we'll make some tracks available on the site, and then maybe it's a logical step to release something. I see it as a whole package. The release is the souvenir to the artists that have played, experienced and participated in Plexiphonic".

Ewo will be Providing visual accompaniment at Boltfish recordings launch party for their new compilation titled "Mercury Scales". To Be held on 24th August at Bristol's Timbuk2. The evening promises to offer a great deal of entertainment including laptop sets from Ochre, CHEJU, MINT and Zainetica as well as DJ sets From KADO, Jimmy90 and Star Delta.

Information on the forthcoming Loden album "Valeen Hope" is available from:

Ewo's "Greetings from Tuskan" EP, DJ sets, live sets, exclusive tracks and videos are available for viewing and download at:

www.plexiphonic.com



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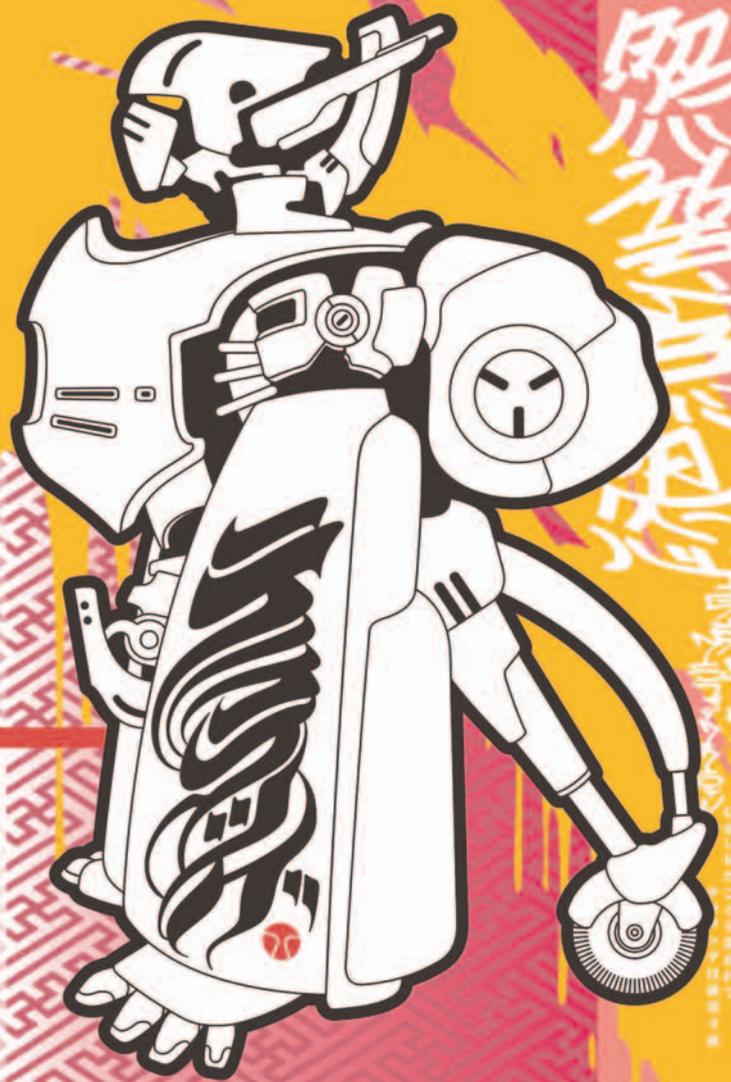
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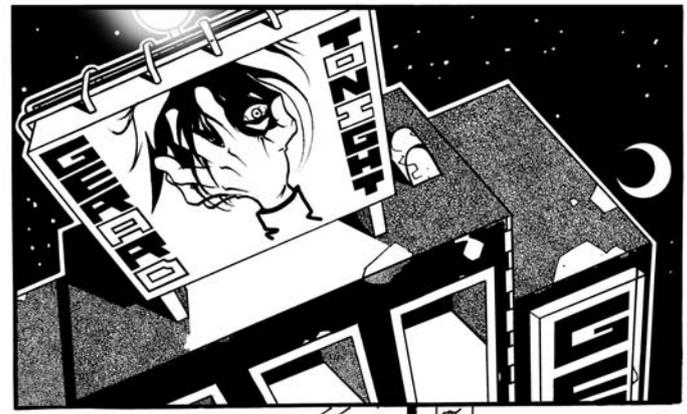
No Strings' is a dark take on the story of Pinocchio, illustrated in harsh black and white imagery depicting the twisted origins of Pinocchio and his creator Geppeto. The comic is 64 pages and features the story and art from myself, plus guest artists Agent, Axis, Craola, Odisie2, Shucks, Solo One, Tizer, Hefs, Insa, Grillo and Brachy each creating a page and sharing their own visions of the dark fairy tale. The idea of creating this comic was born out of a love for the comic medium (and a love for perverting anything deemed innocent!). The comic took about a year to complete and was self published. I've always been attracted to the world of self publishing, making something out of nothing. It was hard work, but something I found very rewarding. It's also very liberating not having to worry about censorship when self publishing. I love graffiti for the same reason - the creative freedom it allows.

The comic is an originally conceived trilogy, although at this point in time I can't tell you when the next one will hit the shelves as I'm up to my knee's dealing with a host of projects. One thing I can tell you is the story WILL be finished, and will once again feature a variety of guest artists from the comic and street art scene.

Part one is limited to 1000 copies and currently available from the following outlets:

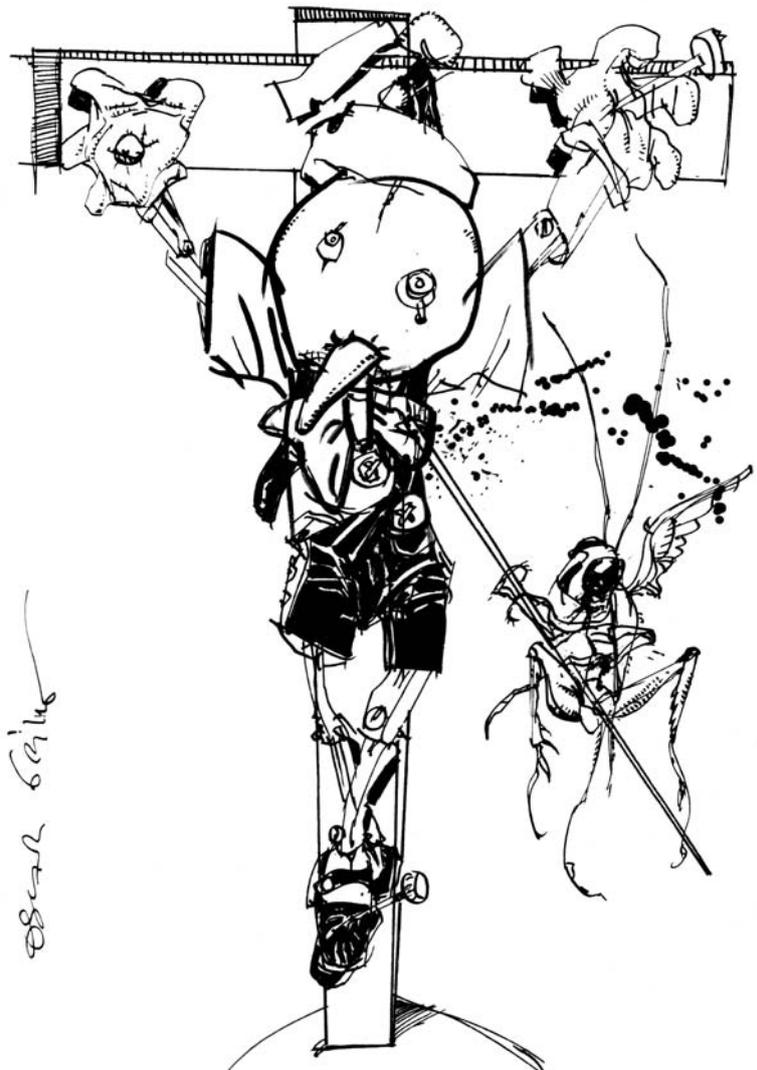
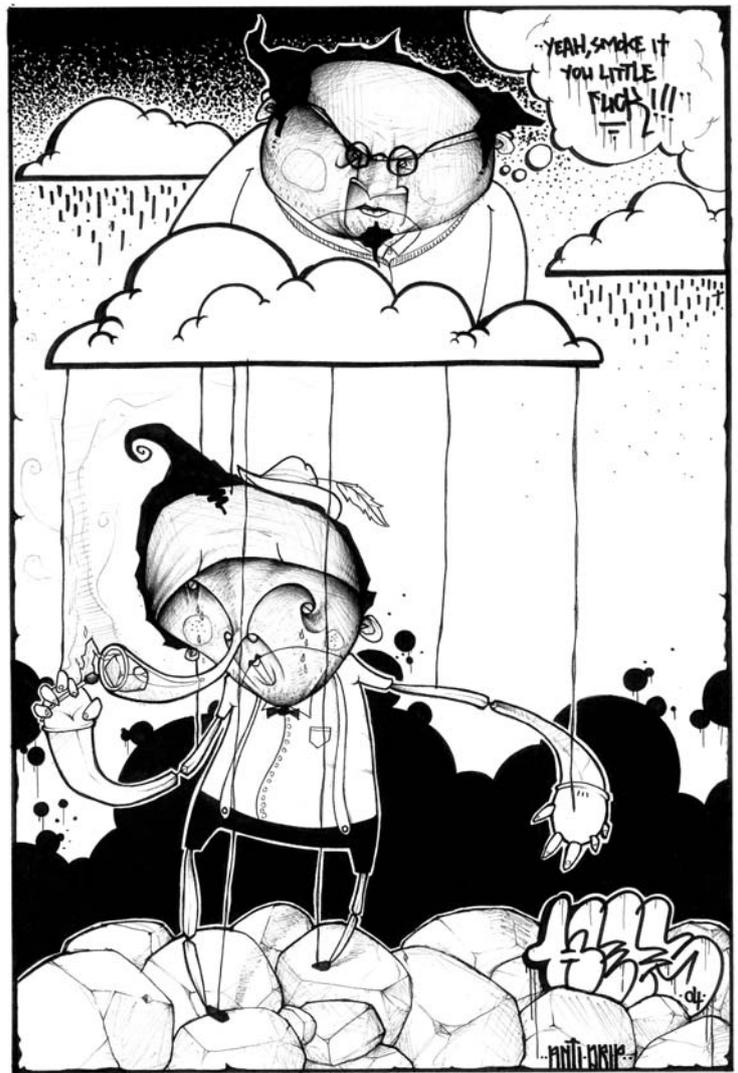
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Sending Orbs

Interview: Jody Orchard

Sending Orbs is a new label founded by three guys from the Netherlands. They were kind enough to answer a few questions and give us a bit of insight on how and why they got things started.

Can you begin by telling us about the label, how it began and who's involved?
We (Wouter Eising, Bas de Kort & Kristian Peters) came together in the summer of 2004 and wanted to start a business in electronic music. Because we are great fans of this music scene, we wanted to open an online electronic music shop. But after a few second thoughts we had a much better idea: "let's start a label". We discussed the idea with an artist we'd like to feature. His release would kick-start the label, and as you know, Kettel released 'Through Friendly Waters' on Sending Orbs; our first release.

Has Kettel been a big influence in the past and what exactly is his role in what you're doing now?

We know Reimer (Kettel) as a very good friend and as Wouter's brother. The Sending Orbs label would not have been born without him. He was our starting point, a terrific bridge into the electronic music scene. So we owe him a lot for making our dream possible. Of course he is paid and gets all the girls. ;)

Anything else that has been a particular inspiration and has contributed to make Sending Orbs what it is?

We like electronic music a lot and that's our main inspiration. We all like the same particular styles within this genre too, so we focus our attention on our favorite music which can be described as melodic ambient and melodic IDM with emotional flavors. Next to that, art is very important for us. We can talk for hours about the art of the CDs we possess, not even mentioning the time we talk about art during the developmental process of our own CDs. So the combination of art and music make SO what it is. Another strong principle we hold is the fair treatment of our artists. We think a lot of music labels focus too much on making short-term profits, with the result that artists are underpaid. Artists do the most important work; they create all the beautiful stuff. So we try to give our artists a good and fair reward. We pay with cash (not with t-shirts or CDs) and on time.

How did you get in contact with Jeroen Advocaat, the guy responsible for the artwork and are there plans to feature his artwork on further releases?

Wouter knew Jeroen from high school. He is a professional artist now. We asked him to do the art after we saw some pictures of his current work. After the first concepts we already knew this collaboration would be a good one. Our ideas about the music and the associated art matched his exactly. We are stunned by his talent and his compositions. The artwork for our future releases will also be by Jeroen. He has moved to China though, so all communication goes via the Internet. Maybe we'll see some Chinese influences on the next release.

Looking at the releases so far its easy to tell that time and effort has gone into delivering a succinct package with the imagery adding depth to the overall experience (especially with the Secede album). At what stage in each projects production was the artwork done? Did the artists have any input in the final design?

All parties involved in the development of each release have some input in the design process. The first ideas of Tryshasla came from Lennard (Secede). Then Jeroen adds his ideas and of course we have our say. After that, Jeroen draws the first concepts and from that point the discussion starts with a lot of conversation between Sending Orbs, Jeroen and Lennard by chat and mail. We move step by step to the final design.

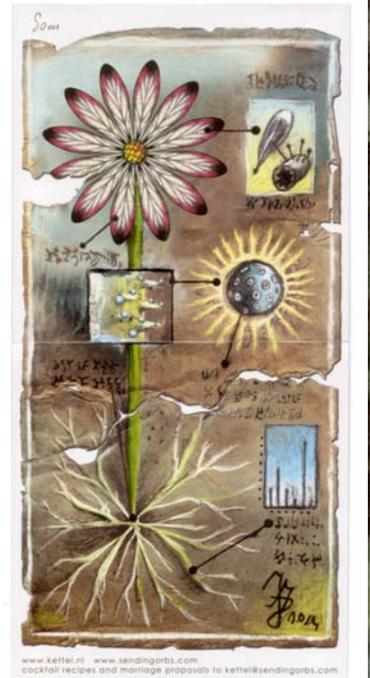
You've recently had your first label night with live performances from both Kettel and Secede. Will this be a regular event and is it a particular preference of yours to release music from artists who can deliver a live show?

The recent label showcase came as a surprise to us. We were asked by Errorkrew (www.errorkrew.nl) if we could do something on the famous Stubnitz boat in Amsterdam. Of course we had this in mind, but never expected it to happen so soon. We hope to be able to do this on a regular basis, but the electronic music (IDM) scene remains relatively small here. We only sell a small part of our records in the Netherlands: they prefer to watch Tlsto on MTV. The only chance of getting a big audience is to continue to collaborate with other organizations and find a suitable location in a big city like Amsterdam. The costs of such a night are also an important issue. It's great if an artist is capable of performing live, but it's not a requirement to release music on our label. We'll try to record the live stuff. You never know what will happen; the last two tracks of TFW are also from a live performance by Reimer.

Can you tell us about any future plans, what can we expect to see from the label over the next year or so?

No we can't. There are still no concrete plans for the next release. We have some ideas, but they are all still at an early stage. Be patient!

Check out www.sendingorbs.com for more info.





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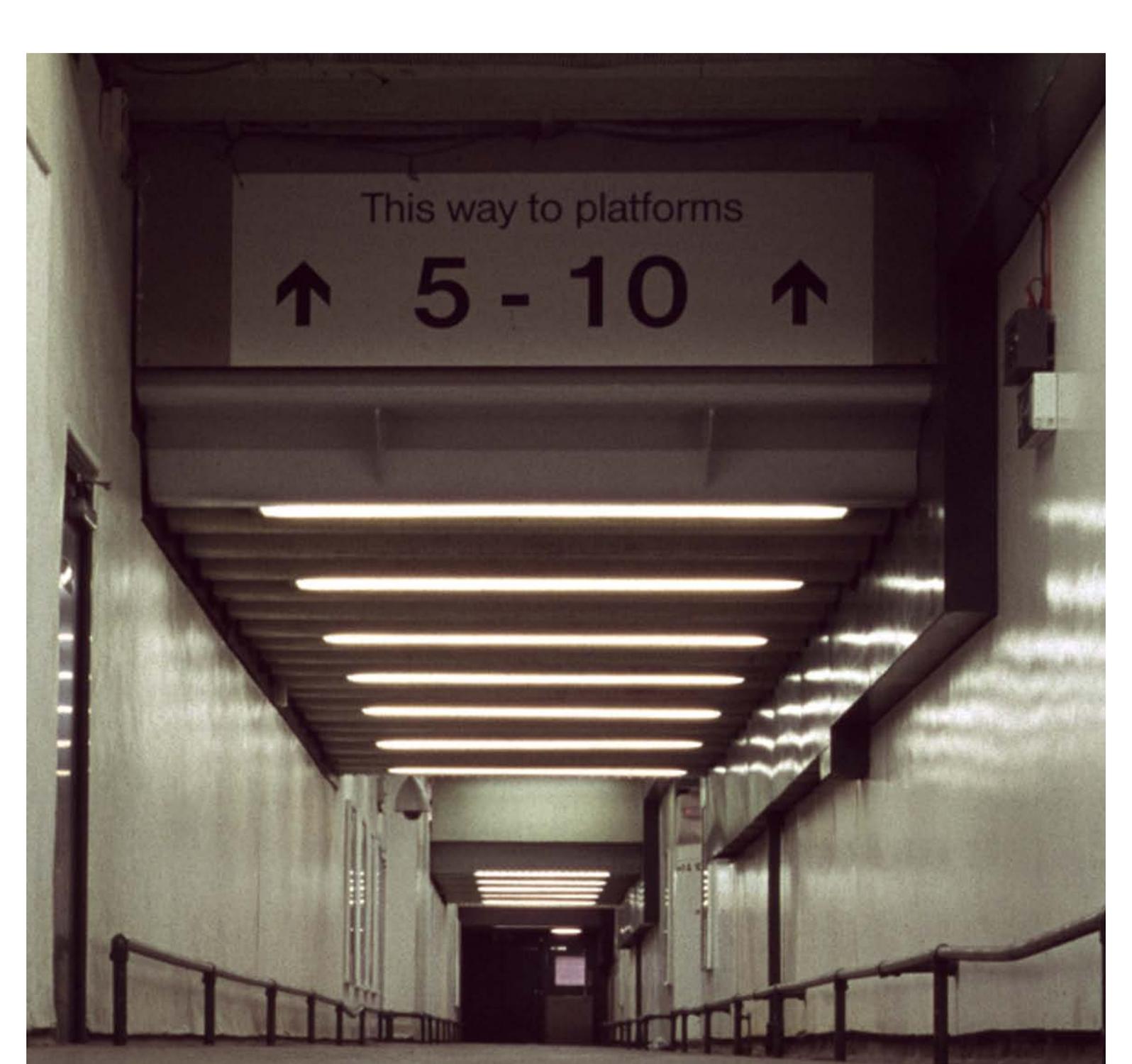


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