





# PBS RADIO FESTIVAL MAY 12-25, 2014 SIGN UP... DON'T BE LATE!

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# First Prize

Brand new, ride away, classic red Vespa PX 150 scooter

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# Mon 12th May

Golden Plains 2015 double pass Fox Hotel voucher. Thread Den sewing course Volcom travel bag. Peninsula Hot Springs pass for 4. Madman 12 DVD pack. Ohese Records 5 CD nack Inertia 5 CD nack Umbrella 12 DVD nack Warner 10 CD nack Elefant Traks 11 CD pack. The Omni Recording Corporation music pack.

## Tues 13th May

A tandem skydive for one plus t-shirts from Skydive the Beach and Beyond NGV Artheat membership for 2 The Hi-Fi double pass Astor Theatre double pass Scally and Trombone voucher. Raccoon Bar voucher. The Moor's Head dinner for 4 voucher. Hmbrella 12 DVD nack Remote Control 10 CD nack Mushroom Records 5 CD pack Off The Hin Records 10 CD nack Inertia 5 CD pack. Sony 5 CD pack.

# Wed 14th May

Queenscliff Music Festival 2014 weekend double pass. Legendary Blues Train Experience pack for 4. Soundwave CD and merch pack. Bulleen Art and Garden class and store voucher Thread Den sewing course Aviary Hotel voucher Northside Records voucher Peninsula Hot Springs voucher for 4 Only Blues Music 10CD/DVD nack Shock 10 CD pack. Hope Street vinyl pack EMI 5 CD pack.

# Warner 10 CD pack Thurs 15th May

Double passes to 2 Melbourne Internationa Jazz Festival 2015 shows. Corner Hotel dinner and show voucher for 2. Heartland Records voucher The Moor's Head dinner for 4 voucher. Thornbury Records youcher. St Kilda Music Walking Tour double pass Remote Control 10 CD pack Madman 12 DVD pack. Umbrella 12 DVD pack. Shock 10 CD pack. Jazzhead 5 CD pack. Mushroom Records 5 CD pack. Rocket 5 CD pack.

# Fri 16th May

Melko voucher.

Golden Plains 2015 double pass

Nanier Hotel dinner voucher

Polyester Records voucher. Northside Records voucher Thornbury Records youcher Astor Theatre double pass Aviary Hotel yourher Off The Hip Records 10 CD pack EMI 5 CD pack. Hope Street 4 CD pack. Madman 12 DVD pack. The Omni Recording Corporation music pack.

# Sat 17th May

Double passes to 2 Melbourne International Jazz Festival 2015 shows So Frenchy So Chic 2015 double pass. Framed Bluesfest artist poster from Hogan Gallery. Melko voucher. Fieberger womens shoes voucher. Bulleen Art and Garden class and store voucher. Thornbury Records voucher Outre Gallery nack Remote Control 10 CD pack Dew Process CD/DVD pack

# Elefant Traks 11 CD pack Sun 18th May

Warner 10 CD pack

Womadelaide Festival 2015 double pass. Fleurage perfume making course for 2. Legendary Blues Train Experience Pack for 4. Marios food hamper. Aviary Hotel voucher Peninsula Hot Springs pass for 4. Thornbury Records voucher. Jazzhead 5 CD nack Rocket 5 CD pack. 12 DVD Pack from Umbrella Entertainment The Omni Recording Corporation music pack. Hope Street vinyl pack.

## Mon 19th May Double passes to 2 Melbourne International

Jazz Festival 2015 shows Let Them Eat Cake 2015 double pass. A tandem skydive for one plus t-shirts from Skydive the Beach and Beyond. Gravity Coffee golden ticket voucher. Thread Den sewing course. SMART Alec Hatters voucher Bulleen Art and Garden class and store youcher Umbrella 12 DVD nack Remote Control 10 CD pack Obese Records 5 CD pack. Inertia 5 CD pack

# Tues 20th May

Thorens turntable and accessories from Speakerbits. Volcom deluxe travel bag Soundwave CD and merch pack Thread Den sewing course. Peninsula Hot Springs pass for 4. Polyester Records voucher Astor Theatre double pass Madman 12 DVD nack Remote Control 10 CD pack EMI 5 CD pack. Dew Process CD/DVD pack. Sony 5 CD pack.

# Wed 21st May

Legendary Blues Train Experience Pack for 4. Framed Bluesfest artist poster from Hogan Gallery. Marins food hamner Fox Hotel voucher. The Moor's Head dinner for 4 voucher Peninsula Hot Springs pass for 4. Secret Service 5 CD pack. Umbrella 12 DVD pack. Astor Theatre double pass Off The Hip Records 10 CD pack. Thornbury Records voucher.

Fleurage perfume making course for 2

# Thurs 22nd May

Port Fairy Folk Festival 2015 double pass. Soundwave CD and merch pack. The Omni Recording Corporation music pack Bulleen Art and Garden class and store voucher Northside Records voucher. Madman 12 DVD pack. Umbrella 12 DVD pack. Off The Hip Records 10 CD pack St Kilda Music Walking Tour double pass. The Hi-Fi double pass. Head Records 5 CD pack Rocket 5 CD pack Secret Service 5 CD pack.

# Fri 23rd May

Falls Festival double pass Melko voucher. Astor Theatre double pass Raccoon Bar voucher The Moor's Head dinner for 4 youcher Off The Hip Records 10 CD pack. Strawberry Fields 2014 double pass. The Operatives double pass. Gravity Coffee golden ticket voucher. Hone Street 4 CD nack Mushroom Records 5 CD pack. Umbrella 12 DVD nack Beyond the Pale vouche

# Sat 24th May

Gerard Farmer Food Gardener custom-made timber garden bed. Rightwire qualified electrician for 8 hours. Melko voucher. Marios food hampe Northcote Social Club dinner and show voucher for 2. Thread Den sewing course Ohese Records 5 CD nack Flefant Traks 11 CD nack The Omni Recording Corporation music pack. Secret Service 5 CD pack. Umbrella 12 DVD pack.

## Sun 25th May

Maton SRS60 acoustic guitar. Johnathan's Butchers youcher. Only Blues Music 10CD/DVD nack Umbrella 12 DVD nack Bulleen Art and Garden class and store voucher Head Records 5 CD pack. Sony 5 CD pack. Dew Process CD/DVD pack. Off The Hip Records 10 CD pack. Legendary Blues Train Experience Pack for 4 Double passes to 2 Melbourne International Jazz Festival 2015 shows Aviary Hotel voucher.

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**ARTS** 











# A NOTE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Mad for music? We here at PBS are and think there are lots of people out there just like us. By reading this magazine, we already know where YOU stand.

It's that time of year again for our annual Radio Festival member drive. We will be taking a trip with Alice into Radioland - down the rabbit hole, on a rich and wonderful musical journey. Ask your friends along and join us for the ultimate

Those listeners taking the leap will go into the running to win a Red Vespa PX 150 scooter, thanks again to Peter Stevens Motorcycles. Audiophile have come to the party with a fantastic hi-fi system for the second prize, and there's a swag of daily prizes so big the Queen of Hearts would be jealous. As always, we have special limited-edition t-shirts for the passionate among you and compilations of exclusive highlights from PBS' Studio 5 Live for all, brought to you by Coopers. You can find full details of the prizes up for grabs on pages 2 and 3.

I hope everyone enjoyed Drive Live in early February on PBS, where we had more than 15 acts come in to the station to play live, in front of an eager audience. You can revisit some of the highlights on our website with great live videos from White Hex, The Stevens, Hiatus Kaiyote, Harry Howard and the NDE and The Murlocs.

I'd like to offer a warm welcome to Cat McGauran, joining Crispi weekdays from 6am on 'The Breakfast Spread'. Other new faces (and voices) to the station include Peter Bramley and Izabel Caligiore on our insomnia roster, with 'Club it to Death' and 'Lullabies for Insomniacs'. Not so new, but now a regular to Sunday mornings is Rockin' Ron Dickinson taking you on a 'Magic Carpet Ride'. Mitch Booth's extreme metal program 'Through the Collapse' has moved to Thursdays at midnight providing a

solid four-hour block of metal and stepping into Tuesdays at midnight is Joshua Hodson-Smith's 'Peeking Through the Wool', a trip through the outer reaches of global psychedelia.

After more than a decade on air, we farewell Adrian Ockerby from 'Makeshift Swahili' thanks Adrian. Glen Morrow has decided to spend more time with his family than with 'A Dog's Breakfast', and Janelle and Fanta no longer need to get up on Sunday morning, while Alessia Pegoli realized that 2am really wasn't the time for 'The Prosecco Hour'!

Finally, congratulations to Empat Lima (pictured), a band inspired by the garage sounds of the 60s, and the collision of Asian and Western pop cultures. They took out a bevy of prizes in our February performer member campaign, by signing up to Richie 1250's 'Stone Love', Thanks to Fully Sick Film Clips. Implant Media, While You Sleep, SoundMerch and Coopers for supporting this year's performer campaign – with your support, we expect to see Empat Lima's name up in lights very soon.

Now don't be late or forget to give us a bell on 8415 1067, or jump online and sign up at pbsfm.org.au. Long may the musical adventure continue from your radio.

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FEBRUARY PERFORMER MEMBER CAMPAIGN WINNERS EMPAT LIMA

# AND FROM THE EDITOR

Aside from the usual great contributions from our in-house team of PBS staff and announcers, I'm very pleased this issue to have transmissions beamed in from the brains behind two or my favourite stops on the world wide web. Daniel Shiman, whose Office Naps, The Exotica Project and The Lonely Beat websites are a goldmine for anyone with an interest in the atmospheric side of post-war popular music, came through with a typically thoughtful and well researched piece on the rich seam of exotica in American jazz. Danny also broadcasts a great radio show from his local community station in the West Texas desert that's well worth tuning into if you can sync up the

Closer to home we have Melbourne's own Rob Ettelson, who has combed the wealth of amazing interviews he's done for his Unkut.com website to bring us a selected oral history of New York's hip-hop clubs in the heyday of the 1980s. If you're a fan of the era, dig into his archives for in-depth interviews with everyone from Big Daddy Kane to Funkmaster Wizard Wiz.

If you prefer to live in the now, our new Saturday night show BPM's rotating roster of DJs have some fine recommendations for fresh electronic sounds you can wrap your ear around too.

Have a good autumn, take your dog (or somebody else's) for a walk in the park, crunch some dry leaves under your feet, eat some BBQ, and keep your portable radio handy so we can keep you company all the while. Seasons change, friends and lovers come and go, but as long as folks keep supporting us, PBS will always be there.

### RICHIE 1250

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Melbourne's diverse music community. We strive to achieve this through the following goals:

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# Lotus Land: The curious legacy of jazz exotica

# BY DANIEL SHIMAN

Exotica was a colorful programmatic music that conjured impressions of Polynesia, of the East, of Africa, of various fabricated paradises, Shangri-Las and faraway latitudes. Popular in the 50s and 60s, it sprang largely from the imaginations of Hawaiian tourist bar musicians and Hollywood composers. Exotica's repertoire was of jungle interludes, languid tropical reveries and exotic arrangements of familiar standards, its instrumentation an atmospheric mélange of flutes, Afro-Latin percussion, vibraphones, bird calls and bogus incantations.

Exotica encapsulated a moment in Western (and specifically American) culture when an increasingly suburban middle class had both the leisure time and the means to avail themselves of the newly-introduced stereo system (and the realistic, album-length sonic environments it facilitated). There was no mistaking the subtext of exotica's beautiful, lurid album covers and song titles like 'Forbidden Island,' 'Taboo,' 'River of Dreams' and 'Return to Paradise.' Exotica meant escape, if momentarily, from the Atomic Age ideals of a well-ordered society, structured workaday life and prescribed social and sexual mores.

Recordings by Les Baxter, Martin Denny, Arthur Lyman and Yma Sumac, along with dozens of albums by other artists in similar cocktail combo and easy-listening settings, are today cited as exotica's foundation. Exotica was nothing if not catholic during the music industry's mid-century boom, however, finding expression in an array of genres, including Latin music, girl-group pop, rhythm & blues, surf music and early rock 'n' roll.

It was post-war jazz, however, where exotica found perhaps its most fascinating and richly fruitful host. Jazz, that most authentic of American art forms; jazz, that increasingly rigorous, increasingly elite 20th century music. Not only did bop deliver tropical idylls to discerning listeners in the 50s and 60s, it used many of the same musical

tropes, and took many of the same thematic liberties, as its easy listening counterparts.

But first a brief tangent. While it only became a bona fide phenomenon in the decades after World War Two, exotica on record extends far back to the 78 rpm era, to the early recorded works of Debussy, Rimsky-Korsakov and Ravel, to impressionistic Hawaiiana, to "oriental" orchestras and to assorted dubious Tin Pan Alley jungle novelties. Similarly, one can trace the thread of exotica back in pre-war jazz, too. All but the best few sides were a trifle forced, however. For every Duke Ellington 'Echoes of the Jungle' or Mills Blues Rhythm Band 'Congo Caravan' there were many more tacky jungle music cash-ins and dire 'Streets of Cairo' leitmotifs.

It wouldn't be until the mid-40s that jazz, in its sleek new bebop guise, finally found a convincing language for channeling its exotic impulses. Though it would always mirror popular tastes to some degree, it's worth noting a few additional factors that made jazz a natural outlet for exotica in the 50s and 60s.

Crucially, there was the new freedom of bebop's radical harmonic language. Early examples abound of boppers working in unusual modes with exotic themes, from Oscar Pettiford's 'Oscalypso' (1950), Howard McGhee's 'Night Mist' (1947), Dizzy Gillespie's 'Night in Tunisia' (1946) and Tadd Dameron's 'Jahbero' (1948) to

obscure 78 sides like Sax Mallard's 'The Mojo' (1947) and Eddie Wiggins' 'Orientale' (1946).

The success of mambo-jazz crossover experiments was also a critical factor. Ambitious early *cubop* recordings by Machito, Dizzy Gillespie and Chico O'Farrill helped to establish "exotic" Afro-Latin percussion and rhythms as a fixture in bop.

Simultaneously, recorded jazz was itself maturing and expanding from a three-minute-per-side phenomenon, gracefully taking advantage of the long-playing album format in a host of extended jazz compositions and adventurous suites.

For the first time, jazz's forays into exotica sounded properly otherworldly and mysterious. While jazz exotica never constituted a concerted movement itself, dozens of jazz musicians would record unambiguously exotic sessions during bop's recorded apogee of the 50s and 60s.¹ Geographical concepts often got blurry, but a few essential themes coalesced.

The Middle East and Asia proved especially popular choices as concepts, from Walt Dickerson's Jazz Impressions of Lawrence of Arabia, Paul Horn's Jazz Impressions of Cleopatra, Eddie Bonnemere's Jazz Orient-ed, Paul Gonsalves' Cleopatra Feelin' Jazzy, Cal Tjader's Breeze from the East and Several Shades of Jade, Phil Woods' Greek Cooking, Dave Brubeck's Jazz Impressions of Japan and Duke Ellington's Far East Suite to obscure albums like Lloyd Miller's Oriental Jazz and Joe Maneri's Music of Cleopatra on the Nile.

There were works that were inspired by or that incorporated African and Afro-Caribbean music, including Buddy Collette's *Tanganyika*, Dizzy

Gillespie's Afro, A.K. Salim's Afro Soul/Drum Orgy, Randy Weston's Uhuru Afrika, Randy (Bap Beep Boo-Bee Bap Beep-M-Boo Bee Bap) and Music from the New African Nations, Guy Warren and the Red Saunders Orchestra's Africa Speaks America Answers, Shorty Rogers' Shorty Rogers Meets Tarzan, Harold Vick's Caribbean Suite and Shelly Manne's Daktari.

And there were odd outliers like Buddy Collette's *Polynesia* and pre-Colombian suites by Dizzy Gillespie (*The New Continent*) and Art Farmer (*Aztec Suite*), along with albums loosely oriented around a generalized exoticism: Sun Ra's *The Futuristic Sounds of Sun Ra*, Duke Ellington's *Afro-Bossa* and Roy Harte & Milt Holland's *Perfect Percussion*.

From dark, swirling jazz thrillers to sonorous tone poems, individual album tracks by boppers expanded the boundaries of jazz exotica even

pseudo-Fastern context. The Detroit-born Yusef Lateef primarily played saxophone and flute, but took a voracious, life-long interest in ethnic wind, reed and percussion instruments, featuring many of them to striking effect in his compositions – see in particular Lateef's albums Eastern Sounds, The Centaur And The Phoenix, Jazz And The Sounds Of Nature, Jazz 'Round The World and Prayer To The East. Flautist Herbie Mann was similarly omnivorous in his musical predilections. and, in addition to a number of Latin jazz and Brazilian dates, would record several Afro-Fastern works: African Suite. Family of Mann. The Common Ground and Impressions of the Middle East, Finally. powerhouse drummer Art Blakey, leader of the venerable Jazz Messengers, recorded a handful of albums with large percussion ensembles (*Drum* Suite, Orgy in Rhythm, Volumes 1 and 2, Holiday for Skins, Volumes 1 and 2, The African Beat) that reflected his own interests in the polyrhythms of Africa and the African diaspora. While often superb,

the point, all that had been previously thought of as popular music, including exotica and the broad reaches of easy listening, had been irrevocably displaced by rock music by the mid-60s. Messieurs Denny and Baxter would continue to have their exotic moments, but theirs was music that was, incontrovertibly, no longer hip cultural currency.

When the forces that originally engendered it evolved or were displaced, jazz-borne exotica – itself a curious tangent of an ephemeral manifestation of mid-century culture and music – dissipated along with them. Not surprisingly, no one particularly noticed jazz exotica's absence at the time. The modest, post-modern revival of space-age pop and Tiki culture that began in the 80s resurrected many of exotica's central figures, but its more obscure representations continued to remain neglected.













further. James Moody's 'Zanzibar', the New York Jazz Quartet's 'Jungle Noon', Dizzy Gillespie's 'Africana', Cannonball Adderley and Milt Jackson's 'Blues Oriental', Sonny Rollins' 'Jungoso', Andrew Hill's 'Chiconga', Dave Pike's 'South Sea' and Art Farmer's 'Mau Mau' are among the best of a list that includes dozens and dozens of recordings.

It's interesting that jazz, while rightly perceived as an authentic art form, very often trafficked in the same constructions and tropes as Les Baxter or Martin Denny. If African, Eastern and Afro-Caribbean themes were popular, they comprised a relatively vague set of parameters. Tracks like Gene Shaw's 'Karachi', Gerald Wilson's 'Algerian Fantasy' and Philly Joe Jones' 'Land of the Blue Veils' were moody, terrific compositions, full of unusual contrasts and bewitching moods, but the relationship with the distant lands they summoned was dim.

While most jazz exotica made few, if any, concessions to incorporating indigenous music, it's worth singling out four jazz musicians – Ahmed Abdul-Malik, Yusef Lateef, Herbie Mann and Art Blakey – who did go further in adapting non-Western modes and instruments with some degree of consistency, if not authenticity, in the 50s and 60s.

A bassist with Sudanese roots, Ahmed Abdul-Malik was an in-demand sideman who largely focused on music of the Near and Middle East on his own late-50s and early-60s efforts. Proficient on the oud, albums like Eastern Moods of Ahmed Abdul-Malik, Jazz Sahara, East Meets West and Sounds of Africa introduced jazz players into a

all of these artists' recordings were clearly based in Western musical theory and structure, and ultimately fall somewhere, too, along the continuum of jazz exotica.

Exotica as a style hung in the air in the 50s and 60s. But why was it particularly attractive to jazz musicians? The colorful sounds, contrasts and motifs, the unusual rhythms and the emphasis on otherworldly atmospheres that underpinned exotica were also natural vehicles for jazz practitioners' restless creativity. In the guise of exoticism, the need to justify a strange tone poem or jazz fantasia was obviated. As a sort of musical shorthand, exotica provided the latitude for musicians to take chances, to exorcise creative impulses, to expend wild musical energies, to instantly transform a room's ambience. And conjuring the exotic. Others just sounded great.

In the mid-60s, modal and avant-garde jazz albums began making use of the imagery of faraway lands.<sup>2</sup> Such places were invoked largely with reference to the Pan-African interests of black consciousness rather than as loci of exotic escapism and leisurely pleasure, however. Various sitar jazz experiments came sometimes close to the spirit of exotica, too.<sup>3</sup> But these were more closely related to a younger psychedelic counterculture's nascent interest in Eastern mysticism.

Notwithstanding such dalliances, jazz, contending with something of an identity crisis, its popularity in permanent decline, had, past the 60s, largely ceased to be a vessel for exotica, at least in the previously established sense of the term. More to

"It's interesting that jazz, while rightly perceived as an authentic art form, very often trafficked in the same constructions and tropes as Les Baxter or Martin Denny."

Just below the surface of the post-war jazz discography exists this fascinating body of exotica. Musically, the best moments of jazz exotica are like the best moments of exotic proper, bypassing their sometimes unfortunate cultural misperceptions, and transcending a legacy as mere kitsch. Fully realised jazz exotica tracks from Yusef Lateef's 'Iqbal' and Lloyd Miller's 'Gol-E Gandom' to Chico Hamilton's 'Blue Sands' and Clark Terry's 'Swahili' are dark, otherworldly, unironically beautiful recordings.

Daniel Shiman writes at www.officenaps.com and hosts the radio show 'Lost Frequencies' every Wednesday from 9 to 11pm Texas time (Thursday 1-3pm Melbourne time) on www.marfapublicradio.org

<sup>1</sup> Many European jazz musicians were simultaneously following similar pathways int exoticism in this time - a vast topic for another essay.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Pharaoh Sanders's *Tauhid*, Bob Reid's *Africa is Calling Me*, the East New York Ensemble de Music's *At the Helm*, Toudie Heath's *Kawaida*, the Black Unity Trio's

<sup>3</sup> Alice Coltrane's Journey In Satchidananda, Pat Martino's Baiyina, Bill Plummer's Cosmic Brotherhood, Gabor Szabo's Jazz Raga, Emil Richards's Journey To Bliss, etc.

# 20 YEARS OF even

# ASH NAYLOR INTERVIEW BY CRISPI

IN 1994, SINGER/GUITARIST ASHLEY NAYLOR AND DRUMMER MATTHEW **COTTER GOT TOGETHER WITH MEANIES BASS PLAYER WALLY KEMPTON** TO FORM THE ROCK BAND EVEN. THEY WOULD GO ON TO BE ONE OF **MELBOURNE'S MOST ICONIC ROCK** BANDS AND IN 2014, THEY CELEBRATE 20 YEARS — WITH THE SAME LINEUP NO LESS! I GOT THE CHANCE TO SIT DOWN WITH ASHLEY NAYLOR AND LOOK BACK AT EVEN'S 20 YEARS.

# Crispi: How and when did the ba nd form and what was its

Ash Naylor: I guess we formed out of the ashes of my first band The Swarm. Matt was the drummer and I was the guitarist so we started demoing songs with just Matt and I. Wally was given a tape later on and he loved the tape. We started rehearsing in our lounge room in Brunswick and gigs flowed from there. Wally was very connected with the scene having been a booker at the Tote and working at various booking agencies and booking Meanies shows so he knew everyone in town. I guess the musical intention was to just be true to our roots. I had just come out of a band that was heavily influenced by The Smiths. REM, The Beatles and The Who so I guess we had a 60s/70s influence. But being a band formed in the mid-90s, it was hard to escape that whole wave of music like Hüsker Dü and Dinosaur Jr so that had an impact as well.

# C: Your first two EPs are grungier and heavier than later releases. Could it also be said that they are a bit more

AN: Most definitely and I don't really enjoy listening to them to be honest, but at the same time that's why you keep making records, just to improve.

# C: You still play a couple of the songs from that era, don't you? Like '24 Hour Cynic'?

AN: Yeah, the songs I think are good but I just don't think the execution from my end was that great because this is the first band I ever sang in. So I am still learning how to sing at 44 years old.

AN: A little bit but I've you don't have to be r to get a good song across. It's he overall picture. My mental pictu ic is largely based need to get messages across with lyrics. They're more cryptic, more metaphoric. I don't really want to push myself as a great lyricist or a great vocalist, my main concern is being a great guitarist and a great

## ody is really more important?

AN: Yeah, the music is what motivates me and deally down the track I'll probably just be making rumental music like my last solo album which s half instrumental, half vocal.

> "I could play a 45 minute guitar solo until my head exploded and I'd like nothing more than to do that but I'm always drawn back to pop songs."

# C: In 1996, Even's first full length album Less Is More came out. It has a cleaner sound than the EPs and the song writing sounded more confident as well. It's also an extremely melodic record.

AN: Yeah, I guess songs have always been my motivator. I could play a 45 minute guitar solo until my head exploded and I'd like nothing more than to do that but I'm always drawn back to pop songs. I used to feel a little bit self-conscious about that but that record is pretty much full of pop songs performed with a lot of energy and making our first record was very exciting.

# C: What was your following like at that time?

AN: Coming out of the Swarm years when we couldn't get arrested, to the Even years when I was just giving phone interviews all the time explaining what we were all about was very surreal and I was probably in denial about the band reaching a wide audience.

# C: Was there a progression in your popularity from when the first two EPs were released until the time the first

From about 1996 to 2000 was the peak period for the band in terms of attendances. It then gets a bit cloudy as you start judging yourself against other bands and the kind of success they're enjoying. That's when things become a bit messy within the framework of a band and how you feel your position on the totem pole. It gets a bit polluted by expectations from the label, expectations from your fans and so on.

# C: I guess around the same time You Am I were going through a quite popular phase. Were they a band you were compared to a lot?

AN: We kind of felt like they had reached the mountain top and bands like ourselves were sort of skirting around the base camp in terms of public appeal. They were the benchmark by which bands like us measured ourselves against but there was also a crossover with bands like Snout and to a lesser extent Pollyanna, Sidewinder, and Ammonia. There is common ground amongst a lot of those 90s bands but I think everyone had their own sort of flavour.

# C: Everything kind of changed for the rest of the 90s after Nirvana came along. Rock music was kind of cool again but there are a lot of differences between rock music in the 90s and rock now.

AN: Yeah totally, I guess the music now is an 80s revival sound and has probably been around 10 years now when you think about it. Bands like The Killers and Phoenix came along in the early 2000s and when this all happened I thought, this isn't going to last very long. I lived through the 80s the first time and I don't want to live through it again! I don't want to hear records that remind me of being an awkward teenager. I want to make records that make me fantasise about being a teenager in 1965 or 1972. They're years which I never lived through so I've got no affinity with the whole style of music that has an 80s tint to it. However, it all makes perfect sense as the kids who are making that kind of music now didn't live through the 80s. You pine for a generation that you didn't really experience. >

Publicity shoo Photo: Tina Kem

# 20 YEARS OF **EVEN**

# C: The second Even full-length album, Come Again, was recorded and mixed by American producer Tony Lash. Why did you get an American to produce it?

AN: I think it might have been a label suggestion because Tony Lash had been in Heatmiser and had made a name for himself making the Dandy Warhols' *Come Down* album, so his mixing style was very strong and I think it really helped our project in the end. It just gave it an overall sheen and also a depth of sound.

# C: Come Again contains arguably Even's best known song, 'Black Umbrella'. Did you write that song thinking this is a really good song?

AN: No, I felt like it was an incomplete song. Part of the stress of songwriting is that you don't know when the song is really finished. To me, it felt like it was a sort of ditty with a jam at the end but because it was written with such ease, it just felt good to play. We just got lucky that it got played on the radio and people responded to it.

# C: What was the response to Even when you toured overseas?

AN: France was OK but by the time the second album came along hip-hop was pretty much dominating the airwaves and BMG France said in a nutshell that the kind of music we were making wasn't really having any chance of getting any air play. We got signed by Arista/BMG in England and got one single out there but as is often the

case, the label we were signed to through Arista, One World, dissolved before the album came out. We got a couple of trips out of it though!

# C: You hear these types of stories quite often when Australian bands attempt to go overseas. Luck often plays a part in these things.

AN: Everything has to be in place for something to succeed. We had a great record but the label had signed 15 other bands, so we were just one of 15. Who is going to give you the attention you deserve to crack radio?

# C: Since 2001's *A Different High*, releases have been a little bit more sporadic although the band has been playing live quite regularly. How would you describe the post-90s era of the band?

AN: It definitely slowed down but in some ways if it hadn't have slowed down, we probably would have split up. In the sense that all the time we've had apart from each other as human beings has generated warmth amongst us. When we see each other again we're comfortable and we're not sort of bickering about things which often happens if you're with band mates on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes things become trivial and get blown out of proportion and you get caught up in the machinations of the band and not so much the actual music. It has been a slower time but that said, I've had a family and it changes your whole perception of the music biz, your whole relationship to making music and what's important.

# C: What plans are there for Even in their 20<sup>th</sup> year? Have you got plans to really celebrate it like a big gig?

AN: Well, I dare say we'll do a Christmas show at the end of the year but I'd like the Christmas show to coincide with the release of a new record. I imagine we'll try and maximise our chances of getting a good turnout by making an anniversary show and Christmas show as the one thing but I'm not big on anniversaries to be honest with you. I'm really tired of gigs having to be listed as something to entice people out.

# C: I think though when it's a celebration of 20 years of a band with the original members, it's a bigger deal.

AN: It is a big deal and a great thing. If people are still interested in a band and want to hear a new album, then that fills me with joy... and relief!

Crispi co-presents 'The Breakfast Spread' with Cat every weekday morning from 6-9am on PBS. www.pbsfm.org.au/breakfast

For more on Even visit www.even.com.au



"That's when things become a bit messy within the framework of a band and how you feel your position on the totem pole. It gets a bit polluted by expectations from the label, expectations from your fans and so on."





Australian Institute of Music, 120 King Street, Melbourne VIC For more information visit aim edu.au or call 1300 301 983







Depression recorded a demo in the months after the Dead Kennedys tour which would become the first release for Reactor Records, the now modestly collectible *Money Chain* 7 inch, issued in January 1984.

Biafra himself would later feature 'What a Strange World', from Depression's self-titled LP for Reactor on the *Welcome to 1984* compilation – a collection of international hardcore bands put out by Maximumrocknroll.

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The influence of the Dead Kennedys and UK anarcho-punk pioneers Crass reached beyond the punk image or sound. Similar to the intentional community Dial House, where members of Crass lived communally in the UK, members of Depression and Reactor label mates Gash and Psychotic Maniacs all lived together in Hardcore House – the Caulfield share house which also served as a headquarters for their sorties into Melbourne's punk scene. All of Depression's material was written there, all bands rehearsed there and Smeer, who played guitar in Depression and drums in Gash, worked there on other projects like screen printing t-shirts and tattooing.

"They were very political and very much aware of Crass, the Subhumans, the Dead Kennedys and

The station's roster of announcers from the era featured many members of local hardcore bands: Paul Conroy from End Result, Dave Ross from Civil Dissident, Paul Waste of Legend Killers and MacDougall, who was vocalist with Human Waste for a number of shows in addition to running Reactor.

"Back then we had about eight punk announcers doing punk and hardcore shows. A lot of the people in these Melbourne punk bands were doing shows on PBS."

Despite this, Reactor's second release came from Adelaide outfit Perdition, who MacDougall approached to put out an EP after seeing them play at the Ballroom in early 1984.

"Perdition were coming over quite a bit from Adelaide and they became quite good friends with Depression and used to party at Hardcore House." he says.

Intoxicated, Perdition's debut five-track EP for Reactor, was released initially as a 7 inch in August 1984, and then later on a 12 inch format late in 1985. The second pressing of Intoxicated sits in the middle of a period of intense activity for the label, with debut 7 inches from Permanent Damage and label stalwarts Vicious Circle released early in the year.

One of the crowning glories of the Reactor Records years would also come in this period,

"The label went dormant until 2008 when I was told by my friend Scotti at Missing Link that if I didn't put out a compilation CD of all the Depression records I put out, then all that stuff was going to get bootlegged and the band were going to get ripped off."

what Jello was talking about on stage between songs," MacDougall says.

All ages shows were common, as were straight edge punks, influenced by pioneering US hardcore band Minor Threat and their 'don't drink-don't smoke-don't fuck' ideology.

"One of the legendary all-ages gigs was at this town hall in Richmond off Church St, it was the first time the Hard-Ons ever played in Melbourne. The people responsible for those gigs were predominately members of Civil Dissident and Death Sentence and Civil Dissident were all straight edge," MacDougall says.

Without doubt though it was the St Kilda scene, centered on iconic venues The Seaview Ballroom, The Prince of Wales Hotel and The Venue, that served as the real focus for Melbourne punk and the later second wave of hardcore. It proved fertile ground for Reactor.

"PBS started broadcasting in December 1979 from the back rooms upstairs in the Prince of Wales hotel and a lot of punk bands played at the Prince of Wales, so it was all tied in," MacDougall says.

with the release of Depression's self-titled debut LP in March 1985. Despite a difficult, expensive and drawn-out recording process, the record was a success both in Australia and abroad.

Bractor

Perhaps the most sought-after release from the label came several years later though, with the release of a double-LP compilation of Australian punk and hardcore, *The Not So Lucky Country*. (For the collector geeks out there mint copies are available on Discogs.com for about \$100!).

Compiled over the course of two and half years, the album's track listing is an excellent snapshot of Australia's punk and hardcore scene in the second half of the 80s. It features previously unreleased material from Massappeal and the Hard-Ons, tracks from Reactor mainstays such as Gash, Depression, Permanent Damage and Vicious Circle, alongside the Cosmic Psychos, Venom P. Stinger and many others.



Images: Courtesy of Phil MacDougall



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MARISA

# PROGRAM GUIDE MAY, 2014- JULY, 2014

SUN. MON. TUES. WED. THURS. FRI. SAT. **MAGIC 5FT HIGH** THE BREAKFAST SPREAD: A MUSIC ALTERNATIVE WITH CAT & CRISPI **CARPET** 6am & RISING RIDE **ALT. COUNTRY ECLECTIC MUSIC** MUSICAL CHAIRS STATE OF THE ART THE WHEELS OF STEEL **NEW MUSIC ON BRAND NEW BAG AUSSIE MUSIC ON THE SLAB** MYLES O'NEIL SHAW RON DICKINSON **ZERO SUM ROOTS OF RHYTHM** ATIN CONNECTION JAZZ ON SATURDAY **BOP GUN** WHAT THE FOLK! THE GOSPEL SHOW **ELECTRO & TRIP-HOP** FOLK & WORLD **ELECTRO GROOVES BLUES & ROOTS LATIN & SPANISH** JAZZ PFTFR MILES CAMPBELL MCNOITY KATE REYNOLDS HELEN JENNINGS SUSI LANAGAN JIM MCI FOD **BLUE JUICE BLACK WAX** SPACE IS THE PLACE MALT SHOP HOP JA77 GOT SOUL **BREAK THE CHAIN** FIESTA JAZZ 11am **BLUES & SKA** GROOVIN' JAZZ **GLOBAL BEATS** DOO WOP **SOULFUL JAZZ REGGAE & DUB** LATIN JAZZ MOHAIR SLIM ADAM RUDEGEAIR MOSES ITEN MR. DOO WOP CHELSEA WILSON SAUL 7AVARCE DFRFK JUMPIN THE BLUES **BOSS ACTION** TOMORROWLAND SWITCHED ON JUKE JOINT BIG MOB **SOUTHERN STYLE** 1pm **BLUES & RHYTHM** JAZZ & LATIN **BLUES** INDIGENOUS & WORLD FUNK & SOUL **BEATS & SOUL** BLUEGRASS & OLDTIME TOM SIANIDIS MISS GOLDIE EDD FISHER EMMA PEEL MATT FREDERICK IAN DALF SOULGROOVE'66 **HOMEBREW SOUL TIME ACID COUNTRY** THE BREAKDOWN **FLIGHT 1067 TO AFRICA** IT'S A GAS 3pm **AUSSIE MUSIC** CLASSIC SOUL **FUNK & SOUL AFRICAN MUSIC** ROCKABILLY **COUNTRY & ROOTS** CLASSIC R&B JENNY O'KEEFE DINGO VINCE PEACH DAVID HEARD DJ MANCHILD PIERRE BARONI STANI GOMA ZEN ARCADE FANG IT! STONE LOVE **BABYLON BURNING GLOBAL VILLAGE** THE AFTERGLOW MIXING UP THE MEDICINE **UPBEAT SOUNDS ROCK & ROLL SOUL & ROCK REGGAE & DANCEHALL WORLD & ACOUSTIC** INDIE MIXED GENRES PRESS GANG LYNDELLE WILKINSON RUARI CURRIN RICHIE 1250 ROGER HOLDSWORTH MUMBAI MASALA THE MIX TAPE ENTER THE DRAGON JUNKYARD FRESH PRODUCE JUNGLE FEVER **IMPRESSIONS** 7pm INDIAN BEATS **GENRE JUMPING ASIAN POP** ARTIST SPECIALS **SOUL & EXOTICA** HIP HOP LOCAL JAZZ MICHAFI MULHOLLAND FUCHSIA RICHI MADAN DAVE BEYNON MATT MCFETRIDGE **ROSS NABLE** HIPPOPOTOMUS **GO FOR RADIO SMOKE ACROSS** SHOCK TREATMENT SUNGLASSES 8pm REX BROKE **DE JANEIRO** AFTER DARK THE TRACKS **GARAGE & ROCK** & MIRRORS **KEV LOBOTOMI** HIP HOP **ROCK & ROLL ELECTRONIC & SOUL PUNK & GARAGE** DISCO/BOOGIE/HOUSE **BLUES & ROOTS** RONAN HAMILI KEN EAVEL P KING PHIL MACDOUGALL CC:DISCO! JOHN CARVER POJAMA PEOPLE THE BLEND FRET NET SCREAMING SYMPHONY **METAL GENESIS** IN THE QUIET GHETTO DISCO 10pm **ROCK & PROG ELECTRONICA GUITAR EXPLORATIONS** PROGRESSIVE METAL CLASSIC METAL DISCO & BOOGIE **ESOTERIC QUIETUDE BEVIN CAMPBELL** STEVE PASSIOURAS PETER & GARY WENDY MR. SMITH PERRY HOLT THE SCORE **BURNING BITUMEN** THE ART OF BLEEP FAR SIDE PEEKING THROUGH B.P.M. THROUGH THE COLLAPSE THE WOOL VIRTUAL FILM MUSIC HARDENED METAL **EXPLORATORY SOUNDS** BEATS/BREAKS/MIXES **EXTREME METAL** ADRIAN MAIOLLA KENE LIGHTFOOT EVAN **GLOBAL PSYCHEDELIA EXPERIMENTAL** VARIOUS PBS DJS MITCH JOSHUA HODSON-SMITH **IAMES LULLABIES FOR** CONTACT BANGIN' RADIO SHAGGIN' THE NIGHT AWAY **GLITTER & DOOM GOT THE BLUES INSOMNIACS** 2am **EXPERIMENTAL GARAGE & PUNK BLUES BEACH MUSIC** SUBVERSIVE CABERET LEFTFIELD ELECTRONIC ADRIAN MEADE **NOISE** ANDY MERKEL **BIG IAN SUTHERLAND** JENNIFER KINGWELL IZABEL CALIGIORE • • • • ALTERNATE WEEKS • • • • ALTERNATE WEEKS • • • • • • • • ALTERNATE WEEKS • • • • ALTERNATE WEEKS • • • • ALTERNATE WEEKS • • • • **VARIOUS NIGHTHAWKS** VITTLES AND GRITS THE SOUND BARRIER EAR OF THE BEHEARER IRVINE JUMP **PRESENTERS** CLUB IT TO DEATH AT THE DINER

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RETRO BEATS

TONY IRVINE

**AUS/NZ INDIE & PUNK** 

PETER BRAMLEY

**BLUES** 

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# HARDCORE MELTDOWN: THE STORY OF REACTOR RECORDS

"Jello said to me, if you're thinking of starting a label, you should put out Money Chain by Depression as a single. So that's what I did."

"I put the word out – just word of mouth as this was way before email – hey, if you're a punk band and you want to be part of a compilation LP, get in touch," he says.

"I received so many tapes from bands all over Australia, that I had to dwindle it down to 33 bands, and there's 35 songs on the record – I think Death Sentence got two songs!

"I did 2000 copies and that sold out straight away – of that probably only about 800 were actually sold in Melbourne, with a whole bunch going to the US and Europe. I should have done more," he says.

Mounting personal debt and issues with distributors and record stores led MacDougall to close Reactor Records shortly after the release of *The Not So Lucky Country* in 1988. But demand for reissues of many of Reactor's releases was such that the label has experienced a resurrection of sorts.

"The label went dormant until 2008 when I was told by my friend Scotti at Missing Link that if I didn't put out a compilation CD of all the Depression records I put out, then all that stuff was going to get bootlegged and the band were going to get ripped off," MacDougall says.

So it was that the reactivated Reactor Records issued its first release in 20 years – a compilation CD of Depression's recordings for the label named *The Reactor Records Years*. Similar interest in the early Perdition material led to another compilation being released in 2012 – *Not Just Another Anthology*.

When pressed for future plans for the label MacDougall is prosaic – and who could blame him given the current state of the music industry. He recognises the demand for a reissue of *The Not So Lucky Country* and the value of the compilation as an artifact of the time.

"I might do it." he says.

For fans of hardcore and those who *weren't* there, let's hope he does.

**Phil MacDougall** presents 'Sunglasses After Dark' every Thursday from 8-10pm on PBS.

www.pbsfm.org.au/sunglasses

Cam Durnsford is PBS membership coordinator.

For more info about Reactor Records:reactorecords@gmail.com



# Reactor Records: A selected discography

RR001: Depression – Money Chain b/w Soldiers Never Cry/World Leaders 7 inch (1984).

The release that started it all – 500 copies each of white, red and green wash artwork marking three pressings.

RR002: Perdition – Intoxicated EP (1984).

Debut EP for Adelaide hardcore outfit; 500 copies of both 7 inch and 12 inch formats.

Repressed on 12 inch in late 1985 in an attempt to improve the EP's mix.

**RR005:** Depression – Depression LP (1985). Reactor's biggest selling title, and one of MacDougall's proudest achievements for the label – 2500 copies.

RR007: Vicious Circle – Price of Progress LP (1985). Considered a groundbreaking release for the local hardcore scene, incorporating more melodic elements – 1500 copies issued on Reactor; also licensed to UK label Children of the Revolution.

# RR011: GASH - G.A.S.H LP (1986)

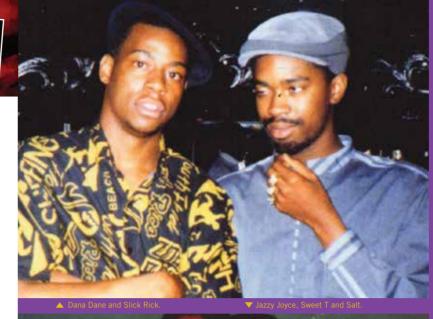
The debut album for pro-feminist group Girls Against Sexual Hype, featuring Smeer from Depression on drums – 1000 copies.

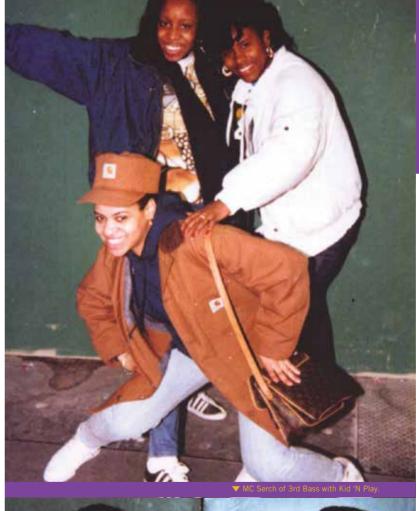
RR015: Vicious Circle – Reflections LP (1986). The band's second full-length on Reactor. 1500 copies released by Reactor with an additional 2000 copies under license to US label Boner Records (home to The Melvins and MDC).

# **RR020:** Various Artists – *The Not So Lucky Country* 2LP (1988).

A critically lauded and collectible compilation of Australian punk and hardcore, featuring 35 tracks by 33 artists from across Australia, on double album gatefold. Initial pressing of 2000 copies sold out immediately; plans for a remastered CD reissue in the works.

For further reading on the Reactor Records catalogue see Chris Spencer's comprehensive The History of the Reactor Records Label, published in 1997.







# An Oral History of New York's Hip-Hop Clubs

# BY ROBBIE ETTELSON

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PARADISE GRAY AND WAX POETICS

During the formative days of the mid-80s, when Run-DMC, Kurtis Blow and the Fat Boys were the biggest names in rap, the New York club scene was a vital part of the hip-hop food chain, providing both essential networking opportunities and the chance for new acts to get on, provided they could win over the often unforgiving crowds. Let's take a step back into time as some 80s hip-hop artists recount the good, the bad and the ugly of the club scene back then.

**MC Chill:** "The Fever was one of the first hip-hop clubs of any note. Any day at The Fever you just met a who's who – I met Afrika Bambaataa, Kool Herc, Red Alert, just hangin' out."

Positive K: "Latin Quarter's more like a family thing, Union Square was really a 'club' club. It was bigger than Latin Quarter, and it was the kind of place where as soon as you walked in you felt the energy. You just felt electricity when you walked in there, like, 'It's on right now!' That was really a rough club. It was straight electric. There was the Rooftop, the Underground, the Zodiac, Roseland, Union Square and Latin Quarter were the clubs of the time."

Chucky Smash [The Legion]: "Rooftop was probably one of the biggest, most influential clubs that we went to. That was the hustler era, where you would see the likes of Rich Porter, Alpo, AZ – pretty much all the drug lords at that time. You would see people like LL Cool J come down, DMC would be down there. They would come down there just to rub elbows with the drug dealers. It's funny, the rap stars are the big superstars now. At that time? The drug dealers was the shit! You would see somebody like LL Cool J just tryin' to inch over and try to be around Alpo and them guys. Another person who was on the scene who gets big, big props, who had a lotta nice jewels who was good on the scene was Biz Markie. He got embraced by that crowd a little bit. He picked up on the fashion and the style pretty well, and he adapted and he linked in good. Right across from

"You would see people like LL Cool J come down, DMC would be down there. They would come down there just to rub elbows with the drug dealers."

# An Oral History of New York's Hip-Hop Clubs

Rooftop was Rucker Park, which is the famous park for basketball, which was pretty much a party in itself. All the biggest basketball stars – again, it was a fashion show. All the hustlers brought their cars out. Basically, it would start off in the daytime – Rucker would be the big-time street ball players, the girls would be out there and all the drug dealers would have their cars out – and then in the night time, the club across the street was the Rooftop."

Sadat X [Brand Nubian]: "There was a time I used to go to parties, in order for you to even have on a chain you had to be a made dude, 'cos someone would take it from you! I came up in an era where if you went to a party you'd get your chain taken if you wasn't strong enough to keep it. First of all, for you to even go to those places, you knew that you were taking a risk. That's when hip-hop wasn't really safe. It was so exciting that you would risk going to Latin Quarter and Union Square – where you knew there would be four or five fights in there - but you wanted to be there so bad that you went to these spots. That was like hip-hop gladiator school - that's where you went to test yourself. If you could withstand being in those places, then you felt like you had a badge of courage, because you got to see real live shows in a real live hip-hop spot. Back then you didn't go to no hip-hop show by yourself. That really wasn't advisable. You went with about two or three people from your hood - at least that amount! We might go 25. 30 deep. especially if you planned on wearing jewellery or having on anything fly. I've seen people have get their coats taken, I've done seen people get their sneakers taken - where somebody tells you 'Take those off!' Cazel glasses were a big item to take back then. That's how it was."

Positive K: "The Latin Quarter was incredible, man. It was the hardest place to perform at. On top of the violence, you had the best time, but you had to do so many things at the Latin Quarter. You had to avoid so many people! Me myself, I knew everybody in there and I wore jewellery, everything was cool. But they put on 'Go Stetsa' and girls were getting their earrings snatched, guys were getting their chains snatched off their neck, getting beat-down and thrown out the club! It was one of those things. If you didn't belong, you had to be on the air of caution. I watched some groups go up there and get booed! I remember when Kid 'N Play got booed. When they first came out, they got booed and it was bad booing! I think the Latin Quarter made them real good on stage, because they didn't want to go through that again!



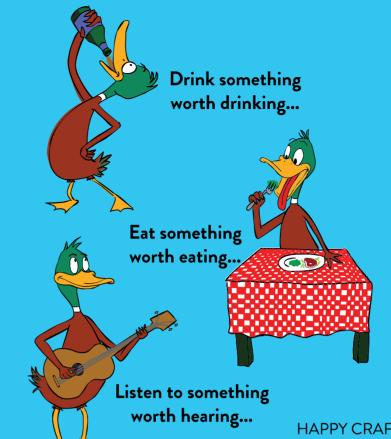
"You went with about two or three people from your hood — at least that amount! We might go 25, 30 deep, especially if you planned on wearing jewellery or having on anything fly."

They would make you feel like a piece of crap if you wasn't proper, man. At that point in time. it was word-of-mouth. If people started talking about: 'Such and such was on stage, and he was terrible!' It would spread from borough to borough. I remember when Lumumba Carson said: 'You're performing next week.' I was like, 'Oh my gosh! You're kidding me!' I hadn't even done 'Step Up Front' yet, I was green. Wise from Stetsasonic did the beatbox for me and he got me over. I was thankful for that. You definitely didn't want to push the Latin Quarter too far. Once they gave it up for you, get out of there. It was a rough club, you had every thug in the world was in that club. They used to say when they went into the club, they was 'going shopping'. I need a chain or I need a ring, or my girl needs some earrings. That's what that was. It was a Brooklyn-based club, and you had the worst of the worst coming from Queens and the worst of the worst coming from Manhattan and all of Brooklyn in there, so there were many clashes."

Pudgee Tha Phat Bastard: "I think the Fat Boys was the first time my brother could get me out of the house. It was at Latin Quarter. Maybe two times I got snuck in because of a bodyguard hook-up. With the breakers, the energy in the clubs was so much different. You had something going on which is more like the reggae clubs now, where people are on the floor, dancing upside down on their heads. The clubs kinda segued into people standing on the wall. Once the dancers left the club, it was over! Everybody came in trying to look fly, hanging by the bar. Nobody was battling. The thing I really loved about those days, there was no holding back! People were flipping and lifting each other up and jumping over each other on the floor and all kinda stuff! It was action! You came to see a show. My homeboy broke his neck trying to spin on his head." ■

Check out **Robbie Ettelson's** huge archive of hip-hop interviews at www.unkut.com





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# RIGHT NOW

Saturday nights from midnight until 2am is BPM, where a rotating roster of Melbourne's finest take a night off from the clubs to bring the freshest electronic sounds to the PBS airwaves. We asked a bunch of the BPM DJs to nominate one track that best represents what's happening right now in their corner of the musical world.

# DJ MISS MAX: South Soul Project - 'Let You Go'

London independent label Black Butter Records just put out a compilation called *Spread Love* and 'Let You Go' was one of three South Soul Project tracks on it. Melodic synths on top of a stylish garage groove and deep rolling bass might not make it the latest and newest sound out there, but it's a lush track and I'm loving playing it!





# JACK KERR: Lone – 'Airglow Fires'

A lot of urban music has become increasingly housey (or techy) in recent years. The counter-influence is, to my ears, a rarer but far more potent mix right now. Lone's 'Airglow Fires' takes the wonkiness that's happening at the other, more interesting tip of hip-hop and makes it housey, in something akin to Floating Points. Stabby, jazzy synth chords, a stuttery snare and a jittery ride jump around between 6/4 and 4/4 (or some other timing altogether – I've been trying to count it out for months), cut through every now and then by those classic "Huh?" and "What?" samples from the Joeski Love track 'Pee-Wee's Dance'. One of the most fascinating and danceable tracks of the last year.

# ROB C: Schoolboy $\mathbf{Q}$ — 'Los Awesome'

How do I choose one hip-hop tune to represent what's happening right now?

What's poppin' right now is trap sounds coming out of the South. This has been bubbling away since the turn of the century, but in 2014 it seems that everyone is on that tip no matter where they come from. The beats are almost a throwback to electro sounds of the 80s.

There is also one label that is doing the business at the moment, and that is Top Dawg Entertainment (TDE). Schoolboy Q has just released *Oxymoron*, his latest album with the label. I have chosen the tune 'Los Awesome', which has a bit of a trap style influence, is produced by Pharrell Williams and goes hard. It features another TDE signing Jay Rock, who will also be dropping an album later this year. Turn it up, this is a banger. Respect to Action Bronson, Roc Marciano, The Underachievers, Isaiah Rashad, Willie the Kid, YC the Cynic who have all produced music recently that could have been here. Check 'em out.



# LLOYD BRIGGS: Metome – 'Black Black'

Like a lot of other Japanese producers I've heard in recent times, Metome has an incredible eye for detail. While there is a lot of brilliantly produced electronic music coming out week after week, Metome's debut album Objet has stood out for me. The album sees Metome honing in on every little sound (and there is a lot of them), chopping, warping and finally placing them meticulously and at the same time seamlessly. What I think differs between Metome and a lot of other producers are his choice of organic samples and sounds. This track perfectly highlights this with a deep, chopped slap bass (yes slap bass) that has slowly become something of a calling card for the producer. Through this track we see Metome go to town on the percussion, making for something of a demented, intricate and staggered beat. Each split second between every percussive hit is either pure, blatant silence or a little sound you never saw coming. Lay a bunch of smooth brass and a persistent, slowed vocal-line over the top and all of a sudden this track is both ADHDintriguing and soulfully smooth. Highly recommended.



"Stabby, jazzy synth chords, a stuttery snare and a jittery ride jump around between 6/4 and 4/4 (or some other timing altogether - I've been trying to count it out for months)."



# DJ IDES: dBridge & Skeptikal – 'Move Way'

'Move Way' got my attention for being the first release from R&S Records in a long time, and a return to the label's 1990s drum 'n' bass roots. The traditionally techno label has stepped up with their new signing and release from dBridge & Skeptical, two cutting-edge producers and DJs in their own right (dBridge being part of distinguished UK stage act Bad Company). The track is a return to heavy electronica, using a terrific half-tempo rhythm and killer Pete Rock and Chip Fu sample throughout. Top quality production in a new direction for the artist and label partnership. A winner on the IDM dubstep frontier.

For the latest in electronic sounds check out 'B.P.M.' every Sunday from 12-2am on PBS. www.pbsfm.org.au/bpm





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# Tilman Robinson:

**2014 PBS Young Elder of Jazz** 

# By Cat McGauran

Photos by Jackson Eaton



Tilman generously gave up some of his time to have a chat about his developing composition The Agony of Knowledge, which is based on a piece of Icelandic literature, the Volsungasaga. Tilman explained that the Volsungasaga is part of a set of old Icelandic sagas that have survived from the middle ages – to him, they offer intriguing insights into Norse mythology and custom.

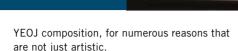
"The kernel of the idea for using it as a basis for musical exploration resides in other literature. However, Volsungasaga is a Norse version of the middle German Nibelungenlied," he says.

"Both were written around the same time and are widely considered as one of the primary mythological influences for Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle and Tolkien's Middle Earth."

Having an interest in the continuous circle of inspiration (an oral poem that had been transcribed into a text, which in turn influenced an opera by Wagner, and a text by Tolkien), Tilman wanted to continue that cycle and bring it back around to music again. After reading and researching Volsungasaga he started noticing aspects of it popping up in today's popular culture, such as George RR Martin's series of novels immortalised as HBO's Game of Thrones, and movies such as Quentin Tarantino's Django Unchained. But his choice was ultimately borne out of a fascination that dates back to his early years.

"I'm just fascinated by Norse mythology. I have been since I was a little kid," he says. "I'd get up and do impromptu speeches to my primary school class about Norse runes."

In recent times literature has become more of an inspiration for Tilman, even outside the



"Part of the reason is far more practical," he says.

"When writing a long-form piece of music such as this or my recent album Network of Lines. I liked to outsource aspects as much as possible so that I didn't have to sit there stressing about how I was going to write that amount of music."

In using literature as a starting point, Tilman has discovered that he can quickly defer the overarching form of the piece to the novel it is being written about.

"This is such a great help because it automatically puts some parameters in place and I can get on with writing the music knowing there is a loose structure in place."

While influences from literature have come more recently, he is no stranger to using other forms of art as inspiration. A previous commission was inspired by American photographer Gregory Crewdson, and another piece he wrote for the Arts Centre Melbourne last year was directly influenced by a space within the centre.

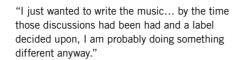
When asked how the The Agony of Knowledge fit into his other current works, he answers: "It doesn't, really." Tilman has been working on a range of other compositions including his latest album Network of Lines, written in response to Italo Calvino's If On A Winter's Night A Traveller. According to Tilman, the only parallels to be drawn between the texts is that they are both pieces of literature that were not originally written in English.

"I guess there is something to be said about the origin of the text though, Iceland is so hot in the music world right now!"

The variety in his compositions and influences are a testament to his wide ranging abilities and a reflection of his belief there is too much emphasis on genre in music.

"Quite frequently to the detriment of the music being written," he says.

This applies to all music, not just jazz or classical composition. The recent outcry over what he'd like to call "Triple J syndrome" and how trying to fit a genre or sound has (allegedly) stifled Australia's contemporary and alternative music scenes is just another example. He believes it's best to let others decide on labels for his work.



With the Melbourne International Jazz Festival almost upon us. Tilman is excited about the opportunity he has had to write the piece and is grateful to the people who have helped shape his

"I'm honoured to be a recipient of the PBS Young Elder of Jazz commission and a lot of people have helped me get to where I am," he says.

"The first and most inspirational people in my slow descent into musicianship would have to be my family. My mother was a music teacher and my father is an esteemed musicologist.

"One of my older sisters, Melanie, is a cellist and composer and I have two younger brothers who are also making music to great acclaim in Europe.'

Growing up in such an environment, Tilman was never discouraged from becoming a musician, as a career in music was seen as the norm, not an

With the The Agony of Knowledge, he wants to compose a piece that he is inherently proud of and that can be appreciated by many audiences.

"One of the reasons I love making music is that the music can be interpreted in so many different ways by different people," he says.

"My goal with pieces like this is to feel like I can explore my own artistic interests while still staying relevant to larger audiences.

"It kind of relates to what I said about genre. I'd like my music to be open to as many people as possible so that they can make their own mind up as to whether or not it is important or enjoyable." ■

Cat co-presents 'The Breakfast Spread' with Crispi every weekday morning from 6-9am on PBS.

The Agony of Knowledge will premiere at the Melbourne International Jazz Festival on May 30 at Bennetts Lane Jazz Club, Melbourne.

### www.tilmanrohinson.com

Tune in to 'Jazz on Saturday' with Jim McLeod on Saturday June 7 at 9am to hear a special broadcast of The Agony of Knowledge.



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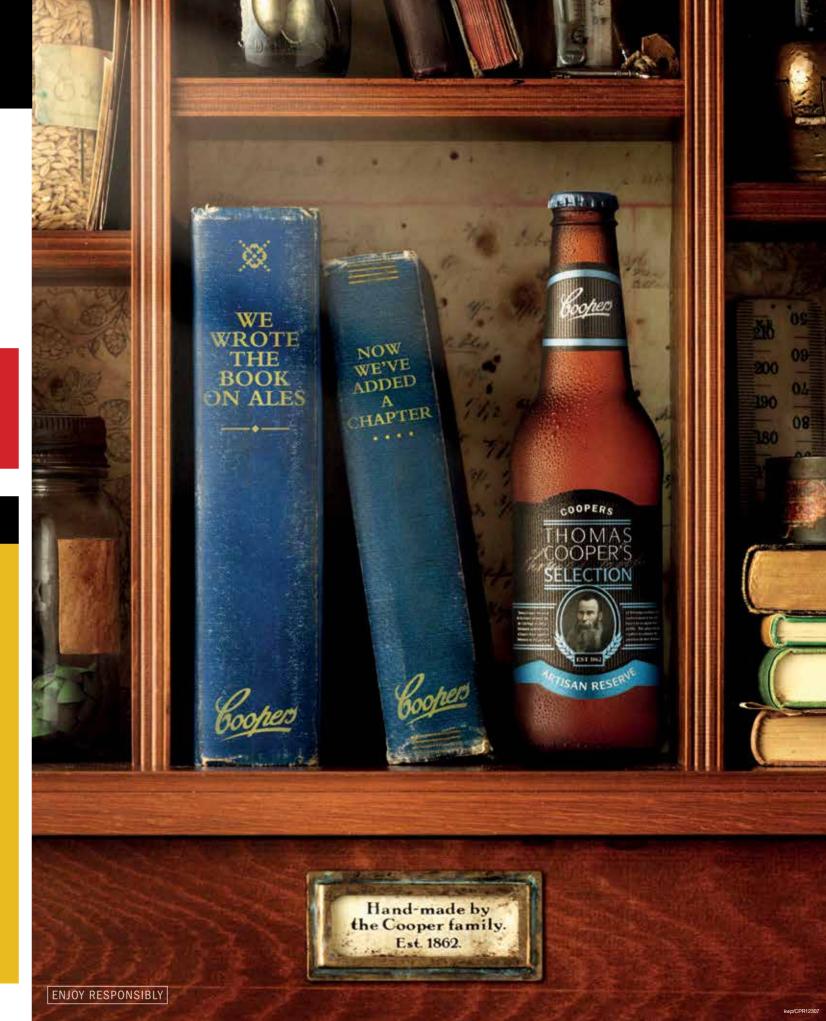
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