

Re:Source: MAG

interview with ZENIAL

From what I gather, the five pieces forming Zenial's first foray onto vinyl here were generated by his use of an old analogue synthesiser during a short residency in Stockholm in March 2012. Whether these recordings are realtime or not, however, remains unclear, although as they squelch and shimmy along there's certainly an organic quality only given shape by robotic rhythms and something like an alarm sounding out on a cranky old '50s space vessel. Rather reminiscent of some of the old EMS experiments of yore, or the antics once heralded by the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, these cuts throb and pulse away like a rusted sci-fi film soundtrack. Occasional whirrings and flutters apply themselves to the general movement at work, whilst the production nods at this all being of a contemporary nature rather than anything cooked up like its cousins in the not-so-distant past. This record makes for a great companion piece to, say, Stanislaw Kreitchi's experiments with an Ans synthesiser, those early Kluster/Cluster records, a touch of Throbbing Gristle, and that dusty and crackling old copy of the Out Of This World compilation LP on BBC Records. (RJ)

The new album, 'Chimera', sees you working essentially with an analogue keyboard at a studio in Stockholm. Tell us more about this, please.

A year ago I was invited to take part in international exhibition in Bleekinge Museum in Karlskrone. I did the sound instalation there and at the same time got an invitation to present my work at this EMS studio. Before that, I had no chance to use Buchla or Serge syntchesiser, so it really was a big deal for me to work on them and to learn something new. The result of this work was a DVD, which was distributed with Transwizje magazine and then, thanks to Zoharum publishing company, it was released as a vinyl.

'Chimera' is only available as a very limited run LP and is your first foray on to vinyl following a succession of other releases available to download or on CD and cassette. How do you feel about having done a vinyl release in comparison to these other formats? Do you have any thoughts on the arguments raging about vinyl being better or worse than other formats? For me, given the nature of the music on 'Chimera', there is a logic attached to it being on vinyl....

Well, you are right, it is my first vinyl and I feel respect towards this format but I wouldn't call myself an orthodox who would negate CDs or cassettes all of a sudden. I agree that this material sounds best on vinyl and I am satisfied that it is realised in that format now - at this point of my career. To be honest, I think that my next work will also be prepared for a vinly format.

You have, over the years, collaborated with musicians from outside of Poland (such as Michel Banabila and others) of course, travelled all over the world to play shows, do installations and run workshops. Despite the fact you appear to be very much an internationalist and are open to such ideas and invitations, your work is not especially popular here in Poland. Why do you think this is?

It is hard to give you a clear-cut answer to this question, because I do get plenty of invitations from Poland. Maybe it is just more about me choosing to be a bit aside, with no pressure for popularity in mainstream magazines or among hipsters. Believe it or not, but such attitude gives me freedom and independence. I do not have to rely on anybody, I do not owe anything to anybody in Poland and I feel comfortable working abroad. Only Cuthuhlu knows what is good for me and he wants me to sit in a darkness and wait untill the stars will set into a lizzard's snout shape [laugh].

You quite recently moved from Krakow to Poznan. They are both very different cities in many ways. Which of the two do you feel has been better to work in? By this, I also refer to the fact you've helped organise shows by others in the past, too, for example, as well as from your own artistic standpoint.

I have been living in Poznan for two years now and I wouldn't call it a dream place in terms of my music fascinations :) It is just a comfortable place to live and I moved here because of the personal reasons. I still travel a lot, so there is no fear I will get stuck in Poznan :) I also think I need more time to become friends with this city. I just lived in Krakow for many years and you know - you can take a man out if it but you can't take it out of the man :)

As you know I was involved in organizing many cultural events in Krakow, such as early Unsound Festival or Audiotong music platform. I was also invited to curate a music program in Centrum Kultury Zamek in Poznan, a big cultural center, but they decided not to continue it after the first edition, which actually didn't worry me too much, because I feel that I am a bit burnt as a curator and it is a high time for me to think about myself as an artist again.

As a musician working from Poland, what do you think the advantages and disadvantages are?

I think that it is the same all around the world. It is all the matter of choices and determination and answers to never changing questions - should I continue to do what I do regardless all the difficulties or maybe it would be easier to focus on something that would make my life easier [laugh]. Good and bad artists are everywhere.

But to give you more of a serious answer, I would have to say that Polish artists put themselves in some kind of narrow margin despite their passion and undeniable energy. They agree for many local festivals to treat them as supports to the international artists, to pay them less and generally to consider them as some kind of second category artists. And the Polish folks seem to be ok with these conditions. Well, I do not, so maybe this also somehow answers your question about me not being "popular" in Poland :)

What drives you to produce music and what are you hoping to achieve with this?

For year I have been interested in a subject of grotesque in life, in abstraction that surrounds us and in so called holes in matrix :) I have been studying the subject of zombies in multidimensional contexts and I see them as the metaphor of a modern society. Add UFO and all the related subjects to that...

I prefer all that to television, mainstream politics and celebrities with their perfect lives.

Zombies have time, they can wait at your door for a long, long time to get you! I will pass away but the sounds I create will stay, even the niche ones.

links :

clip from Chimera album : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVqdAftDF7Y>

site :

www.facebook.com/zeniallo

www.zenial.pl