

Curatorial > INTERRUPTIONS

This section proposes a line of programmes devoted to exploring the complex map of sound art from different points of view organised in curatorial series.

With **INTERRUPTIONS** we make the most of the vast musical knowledge of the artists and curators involved in the **Ràdio Web MACBA** project, to create a series of 'breaks' or 'interruptions' in our Curatorial programming. In à-la-carte-music format, our regular curators will have carte blanche to create a purely musical experience with only one guiding parameter: the thread that runs through each session must be original and surprising. *Deutsche Kassettentäter. The rise of the German home-recording tape scene, part #1* brings us back the vitality of the Neue Deutsche Welle through lost tracks published on tape between 1981 and 1993.

Curated by Felix Kubin

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Felix Kubin (b. 1969) lives and works against gravitation. His activities span futurist pop, electroacoustic and chamber orchestra music, radio plays, performance projects and workshops. In 1998 he founded his own record label Gagarin Records. Over the last two decades, he has released numerous albums and played at many international electronic contemporary music festivals. Along with composing and performing, Kubin's main interest is radio art. He has written and produced several feature-length radio plays for German National broadcasters (WDR, BR, Deutschlandradio) and performed live shows for London's Resonance FM and Vienna's ORF Kunstradio. His plays are often based on a mix of documentary, fiction and sound art. www.felixkubin.com

INTERRUPTIONS #3

Deutsche Kassettentäter. The rise of the German home-recording tape scene, part #1

Part #1 of the *Kassettentäter* series presents a mix of German home-recorded tape music made between 1981 and 1993. Some of the tracks were recorded directly from radio programmes thirty years ago. They have never been released anywhere.

01. Summary

In the late 1970s, the German music scene was shaken up by a virtual explosion of new bands that sounded radically different to anything that had come before. They played music that was experimental, playful, absurd, minimalist and astute, with lyrics that were sung – or more commonly screamed – exclusively in German. Appalled rather than enthralled by this new expressionism, the record industry initially showed no interest in these groups, so new platforms had to be set up in order to spread the virus. Small companies like ZickZack and Ata Tak started to release records by these young artists who were springing up like mushrooms. The independent record label was born.

The spirit of this new movement – later branded *Neue Deutsche Welle* – emerged from a collision between the self-confident attitude of punk, the legacy of Germany's electronic avant-garde and a belief in the imminence of an atomic apocalypse. In his book *Als die Welt noch unterging* (When the world was still on the verge of downfall), Frank Apunkt Schneider describes this despair as a joyful dance on the edge of the volcano, which is what underlies the unusual music that you will hear in this programme.

The arrival of cheap Casio keyboards, affordable synthesisers, drumcomputers and 4-track machines, brought the monopoly of the big recording studios to an end. Suddenly, anybody could produce tracks at home with barely any planning and regardless of their musical skills. The most radical expression of the *genius dilettantism* that these conditions encouraged were the self-described *Kassettentäter** who were at the centre of Germany's home-recording tape scene. Audio cassette recordings offered the best way to spread music without making compromises, and were usually released in editions ranging from 5 to 250 copies. In any case, the *Kassettentäter* were less interested in selling their work than connecting to like-minded musicians and exchanging tapes and ideas. Particularly in the former German Democratic Republic, audiotapes were the best means by which to distribute (banned) underground music** and avoid the SED *quality control* committees that decided which bands were allowed to play gigs and release records.

While the cultural infrastructure in big cities like Hamburg and Berlin was dense and complex, smaller towns and villages were often cut off from the flow of information. This was where the tape scene flourished, and persisted even after the *Neue Deutsche Welle* was finally taken over, chewed up and spit out by the callous music industry.

To this day, it remains a mystery how such a concentrated outburst of new, exhilarating ideas could have sprouted forth in such a short time. And everybody who witnessed the phenomenon secretly carries the flame of the subversive spirit of a world that was still going to end...

* *Kassettentäter* is a combination of the words *Kassette* (tape) and *Täter* (offender), giving it a criminal but also activist flavour.

** All East German tracks in the mix were taken from the double CD *Spannung. Leistung. Widerstand. Magnetbanduntergrund DDR 1979–1989* (Voltage.Capacity.Resistance. Magnetic tape underground GDR 1979-1989). The double CD is accompanied by a book



[Cinéma Vérité tape, 1980]



[Die Egozentrischen 2 tape, 1985]

published by ZickZack in co-operation with Verbrecher Verlag and *ZONIC* fanzine, 2006.
ISBN: 978-3-935843-76-8.

02. Playlist

1. Thomas Fehlmann & Holger Hiller, "Gibst du mir Steine geb ich Dir Sand". From the mini-LP *Wir bauen eine Stadt – Spiel für Kinder* (Gagarin Records, 2006). Originally composed by Paul Hindemith in 1930. First released on tape in 1981 by Ata Tak (Warning Records 1).
2. Lars, "Wir nehmen auf". From the tape compilation *Fleischeslust* (Pissende Kuh Kassetten C-Tel 1, 1981).
3. Die Egozentrischen 2, "Kunststoff". Released on LP by Was Soll Das? Schallplatten in 2004. Music by Felix Kubin and Stefan Mohr (1985).
4. CHBB, "Ima Iki Mashoo". From the tape by CHBB (1981). Music by Beate Bartel / Chrislo Haas. © chbb-musik.
5. N.N., "Schnupfen". Unknown band from German Democratic Republic. Recorded from the NDR radio programme *Musik für junge Leute* (ca. 1982).
6. Wat?Sanitär!, "Feelings". From a tape by ZickZack Kassetten 02 (1981). Music by Tom Dokoupil.
7. Cinéma Vérité, "Außer Atem". From the tape *Der Weiße Rausch* (ADN tapes 08, 1984). Music by Andreas Hoffmann and Klaus Hoepfner.
8. Cinéma Vérité, "Die Zone". From the tape *Der Weiße Rausch* (ADN tapes 08, 1984). Music by Andreas Hoffmann and Klaus Hoepfner.
9. Lustige Mutanten, "Missgeburten". From the tape *Gute Fetzen* (1981). Music by Exo Neutrino & Lustige Mutanten.
10. Grabnoct, "Töten und Fressen". From the CD compilation *Spannung. Leistung. Widerstand* (ZickZack ZZ 2015, in co-operation with Verbrecher Verlag, 2006). Music by Pallas / Pallas, Schulz, Tatschke.
11. Neros tanzende Elektropäpste, "2 Füller + 1 Kamm". From the tape compilation *So nicht* (Reinfall Tapes rc003, 1981).
12. Les Kilometres, "Luffelomp". From the tape compilation *Fleischeslust* (Pissende Kuh Kassetten C-Tel 1, 1981).
13. Stefan Döring, "Volkswiese". From the CD compilation *Spannung. Leistung. Widerstand* (ZickZack, in co-operation with Verbrecher Verlag, 2006). Music by Stefan Döring.
14. Ulrich Lumbabo, "Kuchen backen". From the fanzine/tape release *AK AK 5* (early 1990s). Music by Ulrich Bogislav.
15. Ulrich Lumbabo, "Wickelweste". From the fanzine/tape release *AK AK 5* (early 1990s). Music by Ulrich Bogislav.
16. Andy Giorbino, "Stadt der Kinder". Recorded from a NDR radio programme (ca. 1983).
17. Dolche, "Hände von heute". From a tape release by Dolche (1993). Music by Ando Yoo, Johann Popp and Olaf Boqwist.
18. Der Demokratische Konsum, "Die Kuh". From the CD compilation *Spannung. Leistung. Widerstand* (ZickZack, 2006). Music by Wolfram Ehrhardt / Der Demokratische Konsum.
19. Gurk, "Schaperklackdack 1". From the tape release Pissende Kuh Kassetten PKK-III-07, 1985.
20. Tagesschau, "Gib mir 1 Mark". From the tape compilation *Fleischeslust* (Pissende Kuh Kassetten C-Tel 1, 1981).
21. Anadolu Bayramlari, "Sergilim". From the tape release Pissende Kuh Kassetten PKK-08, 1984.
22. Max Goldt, "Die Lebensführung". From the LP *L'eglise expanded* (Gagarin Records, 2010).
23. Max Goldt, "Amalia goes by train and by boat". From the LP *There are grapefruit hearts to be squeezed in the dark* (Gagarin Records, 2009).
24. Klick & Aus, "Systeme Rasten Ein". From the CD compilation *Spannung. Leistung. Widerstand* (ZickZack ZZ 2015, 2006). Music by di Roes / Klick & Aus.
25. Thorax-Wach, "Tango Fontanello". From the tape release *Euch geht's ja noch viel zu gut* (1981), re-released on LP (Twisted Knister, knack 001).
26. Das Glück, "Krieg, warum denn nicht?!". Recorded from the NDR radio programme *Musik für junge Leute* (ca. 1982).



[Gute Fetzen tape layout, 1982]

05. Acknowledgments

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06. Copyright note

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