Research > MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH… Jonny Trunk

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH… seeks to break through to unearth and reveal private collections of music and sound *memorabilia*. **It is a historiography of sound collecting that reveals the unseen and passionate work of the amateur collector while reconstructing multiple parallel histories such as the evolution of recording formats, archiving issues, the collecting market and the evolution of musical styles beyond the marketplace.**

Each episode in the series is accompanied by an additional programme featuring an exclusive music selection by each of the collectors.

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Music selection by Jonny Trunk.

Jonny Trunk began collecting records around 1982, but rather than focusing on traditional record stores, he chose to comb second hand outlets and street markets. It didn't take long for him to realise that his obsession was not pop music or modern sounds, but film soundtracks and television music. He founded the label Trunk Records in 1995, and it soon gained a cult following as a result of its specialisation in unpublished jazz recordings and film and television soundtracks. Trunk Records was the first label to feature non-commercial 'library music', a genre that Trunk has written about extensively. Trunk hosts a radio programme at London radio station Resonance FM, and he regularly DJs around the world. His record collection now consists of around eight thousand LPs.
www.trunkrecords.com

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH…

Jonny Trunk. Part II

Jonny Trunk picks his fifteen favourite tracks from the fifteen best library music companies in his collection.

01. Summary

Library music and myself met by accident. I had been collecting film and TV music for a while, but was always curious about the incidental background music used for science programming and bizarre European documentaries. There didn't seem to be a way of finding out what this music was or where it came from, no record shops could help me and there were no commercial albums of the recordings anywhere. But one day I found a strange looking LP in a bargain bin. The LP was called *Dramatics Electronic*[1], and had the track listing on its front, with bad drawings of a clarinet and trumpet in the background. After a little research I discovered this was a 'library' record and my journey into the most wonderful, beautiful and experimental world of sound was about to begin.

Library music is non-commercial music made for inexpensive use in film, TV and broadcasting. Throughout the sixties, seventies and eighties it was pressed onto vinyl by a small number of established library companies in Europe, and supplied to TV broadcasters and film studios. You could not buy this music in the shops.

Composed by talented and risk-taking composers, this incredible genre is full of the obvious and bizarre. It is a musical world full of strange wonders, of peculiar nostalgia, of invented themes, oddball electronics and styles of sound that defy categorization. It's where music is made for under the sea, for inside your dreams or for nuclear power stations at lunch time. It's a musical place where composers can be controlled and compose for specific orders, or they can be free of any musical restrictions and produce material that sounds like nothing that has come before.

Some of this music has tremendous familiarity and nostalgia, especially when a library cue has been used for a game show or children's TV theme. But its use is always unpredictable and library music has been the background to science and the foreground the horror and hardcore pornography. Over the last fifteen years it has been recognized and a major influence on hip-hop artists, and has slowly become and important and influential genre. Prices for rare LPs remain very high. I have also produced a book examining the bizarre cover art of the library album; with a need to communicate purpose and not egos, the artwork surprises and can often be refreshingly simple.

Here I present (in my opinion) the fifteen best European library music companies, along with some of their amazing music – strange, beautiful and free from the usual commercial restraints of pop and fame.

Jonny Trunk, December 2011

[1] Frank Gartner, *Dramatics Electronic* (Bosworth, 1973)

02. Playlist

Brian Bennett, 'Image' (*Image*, KPM, 1974)
EgistoMacchi, 'Crostacei' (*Fauna Marina*, Leonardi, 1973)
Allessandroni, 'Agent Giallo' (*Open Air Parade*, Sermi, 1972)
Men of Vision, 'Colours' (*BMLP134*, Bosworth, 1973)
Basil Kirchin, 'Abstractions of the Industrial North' (*Abstractions of the Industrial North*, DeWolfe, 1966)
Walt Rockman, 'Submarine Scenery' (*Underwater*, Sonoton, 1980)
Stefano Torossi, 'Fearing Much' (*Feelings*, Conroy, 1976)
Eric Framond, 'Bacchanal with Satan' (*Univers 2000*, MP2000, 1972)

Vincent Geminiani, 'Alice' (*A Voyage Extraordinaire*, MPI, 1972)
Roland Kovac, 'Nymphe' (*Nymphe*, Selected Sound, 1979)
Eric Vann, 'Sunken Galleon' (*Underwater*, Coloursound, 1982)
Douglas Wood, 'Folk Ghost' (*Industrial Underscore*, Studio G, 1976)
Roger Roger, 'Night Scene' (*Chap 3055*, Chappell, 1966)
Anthony King, 'Maladjusted Moggie' (*Electric Bazaar*, Peer, 1976)
Sauveur Mallia, 'Synthetic Neutron' (*Cosmosynthetic V2*, Telemusic, 1981)

03. Related links

Trunk Records
www.trunkrecords.com

OST Archive, Jonny Trunk's weekly radio programme on Resonance FM
podcasts.resonancefm.com/archives/category/shows/ost

Audio file of Jonny Trunk speaking about soundtracks and the Oscars on Jarvis Coker's radio show
jcss6m.blogspot.com.es/2012/02/oscars-music-with-johnny-trunk.html

Jonny Trunk interviews Danger Mouse and Daniele Luppi for BBC2
www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4M0MZmtDJ4

A selection of obscure soundtracks
www.vice.com/read/what-the-hell-is-that-noise-148-v16n9

A documentary about library music: 'Into the Music Library Documentary' BBC Radio 4
www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01061hr

Video: 'A Hard Day's Night: Jonny Trunk'
www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOUHfqUSIEM

Conversation with Jonny Trunk on his sound collection
rwm.macba.cat/en/extra/memorabilia_jonny_trunk_conversation/capsula

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... Jonny Trunk lecture MP3
rwm.macba.cat/uploads/memorabilia/jonny_trunk_lecture.mp3

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... Jonny Trunk. Part I podcast
rwm.macba.cat/en/research/memorabilia_jonny_trunk/capsula

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... Jonny Trunk teaser
rwm.macba.cat/en/extra/teaser_memorabilia_jonny_trunk/capsula

Jonny Trunk at Ràdio Web MACBA
rwm.macba.cat/en/jonny_trunk_tag

04. Credits

Special thanks to Jonny Trunk, Matias Rossi, Yaiza Hernández and Yolanda Nicolás. Music selection by Jonny Trunk. Mixed with Garageband, Apogee Duet and a Thorens TD124 turntable.

05. Copyright note

[Jonny Trunk during the lecture MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH…, 2012]