



Research > MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... Andy Votel

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.

PDF Contents:

- 01. Summary
- 02. Playlist
- 03. Related links
- 04. Credits
- 05. Copyright note

Mix by Andy Votel.

Andrew Shallcross, aka Andy Votel, is an artist, DJ and producer with a wide-ranging, personal approach to pop music. His ongoing quest has led him to be linked to over 250 releases, covering virtually all the different stages of the record production process. www.finderskeepersrecords.com

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...

Andy Votel. Part II

A selection of records that use eccentric voice manipulation techniques; from human existentialism and sound poetry to electronic, mechanical and computer distortion.

01. Summary

Being asked to do a mixtape for Ràdio Web MACBA was a very exciting prospect for me. I have spent a lot of time at the museum over the past eighteen years and have some very distinct memories of exhibitions I have seen there, many of which have been in tune with the sensibilities that I apply to my everyday creative life. It was at MACBA that I first saw the *Fluxus* archives, which included custom-made vinyl records and Yoko Ono drawings associated with the movement which I still fantasize about today. I also remember an exhibition featuring two turntables and a continuous vinyl cutting lathe that recorded the various layers of sound made by public participants who mixed together the un-sleeved scratched stack of ready made random records that piled up throughout the day: no music – just needle noise, quadrupled squared. Another show I saw was *Fauna* by Joan Fontcuberta (in collaboration with Pere Formiguera), which created 'Fakelore' photographs about an explorer's discovery of a lost animal kingdom using taxidermy to create freakish beasts with too many legs while the public (including my mother) forgot that they were in an art gallery and studied the pieces with a face of sheer terror further duped by a convincing dossier of fake antiqued 'untranslated' logbooks that prompted me to buy the exhibition catalogue... I still haven't told her that they were fake (theatrical). It's fair to say that MACBA has provided me with more inspiration, anecdotes and wonderment than any other gallery and the exhibitions have all been based around some very strong concepts concerning distortion, collage, interaction, perversion, recycling and archiving... These are the key criteria that I use to shape Finders Keepers and the art and music that I make everyday. A Catalonian gallery has possibly touched my heart more so than any gallery I have been to in the UK or America and subtlety or over-intellectualism has always been surplus to requirement.

Having been a DJ, record collector and mix-tape producer for over twenty years I have come to understand that 'a good concept' is probably your greatest asset and what will separate you from the rest of the transitional party DJs as time passes. At times having too much music begs for contextualisation: I have never used an alphabetical storage system, but I do have a section for 'electronic ballet music' and one for 'sleeves with dogs on'. In an era where anyone with a credit card and adequate hard drive space can accumulate a great disposable 'record' collection to keep the dance-floor moving it's even more important to consider context. My daily objective is 'the whys, whats and wheres' of global pop culture, and to keep up turning stones in what record collectors call 'the wild' (i.e., the real world); a place where human beings roam and introduce you to musical-fauna and untravelled mutated beasts. I have learned more about politics, geography, history, cuisine and made lots of international friends by rooting through foreign record shops and reading the back of records, and to consider that, like most Brits, I am shamefully monolingual (a testimony to my bad concentration span) I have realised that language barriers quickly melt away when passion and strong ideas begin to shine.

The Memorabilia mixtape for Ràdio Web MACBA, which I have called *Orator Verbis Eccentrix* (or *Vocal Eclipses of Art*), is based on what I consider to be a strong concept that encapsulates all of the aforementioned facets. All the collaged records on this mix are united by the prominent use of eccentric vocal manipulations of some sort – ranging from human existentialism, sound poetry, electronic distortions or mechanical and computerised degrading. Many of the records are free from language, purely melodic, insanely repetitive or onomatopoeic; other tracks are lyrically indecipherable while all of them are as



[Andy Votel's record collection, 2013]

challenging as they are enjoyable IMO. When I first started buying obscure records as a competitive teenage hip-hop producer (in a crew called Violators of the English Language) it quickly became apparent that I had to leave my comfort zone, which very quickly led to predominantly buying foreign music. As a teenage rapper and rap fan I had overdosed on 'words' at an early age. As an adult my favourite vocalists became Serge Gainsbourg and Damo Suzuki – I can't speak French and Damo sounded like he couldn't speak Earth. Long Live *Lettrism*.

Perhaps pop music, like politics, is at its most POPular when it dishonestly tells you what you want to hear, but I still don't know what I want to hear, which is why I still love discovering pop music. In the era of Autotune the pop music politicians are desperately trying to sell us what they want us to hear as Harry Partch oscillates wildly in his grave... The military vocoder wasn't designed to be the bearer of good news, it was designed to keep secrets... Seek out Major Tompkins (Dave), a man that literally speaks his mind.

So... the original vinyl records I've recycled to make this collage come from a wide range of countries from Alaska to Zurich and taking random stops in Bombay, Brussels, Lahore, Manchester, Melbourne, Moscow, Paris and Warsaw along the way, but regardless of cultural background, social politics or language these records still manage to communicate a universal language of eccentric pop/art re-contextualised for a sceptical generation where someone's word potentially means less and less each day and creative action speaks louder than. To misquote Mark E. Smith (one of the few lyricists that still holds my bad attention span) this is 'music perverted by language' or/and vice-versa and vocoded twice. Thanks to MACBA who taught me about *Fauna* and *Fluxus*, which persuaded me to open Ono Yoko's box. I.O.U. 'Don't Worry x 24+1'. **Andy Votel**

02. Playlist

Gary Sloan And Clone, 'Happy Birthday To You'
 Joan La Barbara, 'Shadow Song'
 Pierre Henry, 'Thème De Myriam'
 Cos, 'Mein Maschine Ist Schon'
 Mythos, 'Jet Set'
 Jane Weaver & Demdike Stare, 'Europium Alluminate'
 Gary Sloan, 'KGOT FM Ident'
 VC-People, 'Danse Macabre'
 Gary Sloan and Clone, 'Harmonitalk'
 Andrzej Korzyński, 'Tulipan Vocalista'
 Space Art, 'Love Machine'
 Mikael Ramel, 'Vi Må Också'
 Bruno Spoerri, 'Lilith, Singing In The Dark'
 Annette Peacock, 'Mr. Joy'
 Hydravion, 'Télécom'
 Basile And Ze Pecqu'Nouz Groupe, 'Le Tube De L'Année'
 Bruce Ditmas ft. Joan La Barbara, 'Soweto'
 Anna Själv Tredje, 'Unkomster Utan'
 Annette Peacock, 'Richter Scale'
 Godley & Crème, 'Group life'
 Valentina Ponomaryova, 'Temptation'
 Billy Green and Jeannie Lewis, 'Eco Blue'
 Hercule, 'Little Green Man'
 Rahul Dev Burman, 'The Burning Train'
 Tafo, 'Zambo Zambo'
 Ilaiyaraaja, 'Kuppamma Pettha'
 Germain Hubert Ales, 'Pudeur'
 Suzanne Ciani, 'Xenon Voice 2'
 Gerry and The Holograms, 'Gerry and The Holograms'
 Andrzej Korzyński, 'Pycha I Bogactwo'
 Suzanne Ciani, 'Xenon Yelps'
 Space Art, 'Welcome To Love'
 Lars-Gunnar Bodin, 'Soon She Would....'
 Pierre Raph, 'Bruits Et Voix Dans Le Cimetière'

Gary Sloan, 'Turbo'
Jane Weaver, 'Spirit Of Widows' Tears'
Max Matthews, 'Bicycle Built For Two'

03. Related links

Podcast: MEMORABILIA. Collecting sounds with... Andy Votel. Part I
<http://rwm.macba.cat/en/research/memorabilia-andy-votel/capsula>

Andy Votel on Twitter
www.twitter.com/AndyVotel

Finders Keepers Record's website
www.finderskeepersrecords.com

Finders Keepers Records on SoundCloud
www.soundcloud.com/finderskeepersrecords

Interview with Andy Votel in Resident Advisor
www.musicomh.com/reviews/albums/andy-votel-styles-of-the-unexpected

Andy Votel's Top 15 Horror Soundtracks
www.redbullmusicacademy.com/magazine/andy-votel-horror-soundtracks

04. Credits

Music selection by Andy Votel. Mixed with Technics SL1200 turntables and cassette player. Recorded in Cubase.

05. Copyright note

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