

Troglodyte's Delight



The Deep Listening Band

Describing themselves as “engaged in a duet with their environment,” The Deep Listening Band creates a delicate sound using the trombone, didjeridus, accordion, voice, whistles and percussion. Working from themes of fire, earth, air, water and ether, they improvise with natural and meditative sounds. For those with patient ears, *Troglodyte's Delight* proves to be a sensual and rewarding experience. JH

Nonsequitur Foundation, P.O. Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504. \$12.00 CD; \$8.00 cass; \$1.50 shipping.

the improvisor

The Magazine Journal of Free Improvisation

Troglodyte's Delight was recorded in June 1989 inside the Limestone Tarpaper Cave. Limestone is formed underwater, and water is a major presence in this New York cave. In fact, it is still being shaped by the water which runs through it as a vital force, singing under the earth's skin. The band members (Stuart Dempster, Pauline Oliveros and Panaiotis) and their guests (Julie Lyon Balliet and Fritz Hauser) do a wonderful job of joining forces with this dynamic cave. The recording engineers, Connie Kieltyka and Bob Bielecki, also deserve praise for capturing both a sense of the space and the many varied sounds. The CD is a recording of a performance: wish I had been there too.

The whole project is a welcome reminder that there are many other things on the planet besides homo "sapiens" and our products. The CD begins and ends with running water and the fifth piece, "Rain Delay," is a summer storm which came through during the concert. To increase their sensitivity to it, the musicians lived in Tarpaper Cave for a week. Troglodyte's Delight is a lovely example of human beings attuning themselves to the environment and becoming part of it instead of thinking of themselves and the foreground. The players entered into the ever-present sounds as restrained, respectful peers. While for the most part the cave has the dominant role, their additions can still be dramatic, punctuating the constantly gurgling and rushing water very emphatically. Usually, however, the musicians sound like animals who live in the cave and just happen to be making noises. Sometimes they sound like wind or rustling leaves. Voices flutter as if they are taking flight, or coo and call like birds. Though held in a watery cave, the concert definitely sounds airy.

Cannery Row is perhaps the most beautiful piece. Upside-down cans catch dripping water over a background of flowing water. For several minutes this serene, almost hypnotizing texture plays alone. Then Dempster begins to flow over his didjeridu, followed soon after by the others. At first this intervention seemed intrusive, but then I relaxed and let another spell be woven around me. Trog Arena is the most human oriented track. Fritz Hauser plays percussion with the water. Voices and instruments begin, rising and fading in a disquieting way, reminiscent of the chorus in the ancient Greek tragedies. I had strong images of chanting around a mighty fire: chants which echoed in a darkness known only to earlier generations.

Thus earth, air, wind and fire all enter into Troglodyte's Delight, a recording which brings an awe of the *Beneath* into our homes.

Saved — the Alternative Music Festival

(was co-organizer & MC of the "Alternative '93")

By Dmitry Ukhov
Special to The Tribune

The Alternative Music Festival is back. And if you think that "alternative music" means independent pop or compositions by a self-made garage band you're probably a Westerner. To Russians "alternative" means the answer to American avant-garde music.

The Alternative Music Festival '93 will be held at Radio House, Ul. Kachalova, from May 28 to 30. Once "alternative" was a dangerous word. Back in 1988 it had political overtones.

"But not any more," said the festival's artistic director, Anton Batagov. "Now it simply means that if opposites attract, they must meet somewhere — like at the Alternative Festival."

The festival was a positive result of perestroika, launched by the state Gosconcert agency back in 1988. This was at a time when even the party appar-

atchiki were trying to pronounce correctly and convincingly the then "dirty" word avantgarde. The romance between adventurous artistic trends and the government apparatus soon came to an end, but the Alternative annual event somehow managed to survive under the auspices of Gosconcert for a period of four years, with two Alternative events in 1989.

During this romance period, literally dozens of innovative music groups and trends, ranging from the subdued to the downright noisy, found their way to an extensive Russian audience. In 1991, some of the concerts were held at the large and prestigious Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, and many events were televised and recorded by the American record company, Mobile Fidelity.

With the arrival of the market economy and the so-called freedom of artistic self-expression, Gosconcert and all other state institution ceased to be interested in further affiliation to the mus-

gressive image. The dire economic situation did not help matters, provoking the next wave of cultural emigration, and there was no Alternative festival in 1992.

Luckily, not all the new enthusiastic musicians left the country. One young prize-winning pianist and composer, Anton Batagov stayed at home and dreamed of restoring the festival. He even persuaded his colleague and the founder-member of the Alternative "crew", Alexei Lyubimov, who had moved to Paris, to join him.

They approached the "Orpheus" radio channel for support and also found a sympathetic ear at the new paper "Moscow News", where writer Alexander Kabakov is an avid jazz fan. Alternative '93 was suddenly alive and well.

But this year's festival is more tolerant: the puerile black denim of Batagov's minimalistist sampling saluting the deadly serious tuxedos of the piano recital

of Ivan Sokolov.

Alternative '93 will feature two tributes to the memory of the departed John Cage (the number one avantgardist for more than half a century) and Galina Ustvolskaya (the underrated composer from St. Petersburg).

Opposites will certainly meet when Maxim Trefant (who earns money for a living playing in "Kurrozia Metala" (a heavy thrash metal outfit), Mikhail Zhukov (of legendary "Zvuki Mu" fame) and Sergei Letov, join French lute player Arkadi Shilkloper (among others) to improvise to the playback of Pauline Oliveros' "Troglydite's Delight".

Alternative '93, Radio House,
Ul. Kachalova 24, Metro Barrikadnaya,
May 28-30, 4 p.m., 7 p.m.
Invitations at the door, or
Tel: 222-0192 222-0131



Camera-shy pianist and composer, Anton Batagov, is the artistic director of the Alternative '93 Festival.

"...if opposites attract, they must meet somewhere — like at the Alternative Festival."

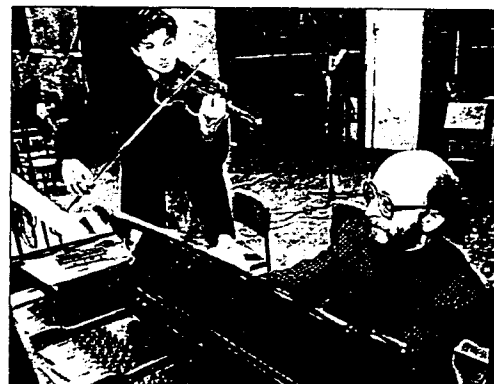
Our alternative

Two days before the beginning of the festival codenamed Alternative "Moscow News" became its general sponsor — when others turned it down, we could not but grant the musical avant-garde's heart-rending request for help.

Oleg PSHENICHNY

Hardly had the reins been slackened at the time of perestroika when there arose all over the country a large variety of musical festivals of such orientations which were ideologically incompatible with the Soviet way of cultural life. They included a festival known as Alternative whose name alone instilled the higher-ups with suspicion and horror. Now that the reins (but already different, economic ones) have again been pulled on to the extreme, Alternative has found itself among the few ones which have not lost their face and still exist in general, becoming no longer a political but spiritual alternative as it ought to be.

The latest Alternative took place in the Radio House and lasted three days attended by the tape-recording of concerts and their live broadcasts over the



radio. Among its inspirers and organizers were musicologist Dmitry Ukhov (anchorman of the festival) and musician Anton Batagov (one of the main performers).

Alternative is traditionally not only a proving ground for high-class academic avant-garde, but also the venue where musicians of other genres rooted in jazz, rock and new-age (new-age was represented for the first time by Valentina Goncharova) try their mettle and demonstrate themselves. Among the festival's present-day favorites are Vladimir Martynov, Tnio O and Arkady Shilkloper whose names are sufficiently known in this country. An excellent performance was put up by the "dark horse" — a quintette from

Sweden which performed several shrill and thoughtful works by K. Reinqvist.

At the concluding concert, when Radio House studio was packed to capacity, all the above-mentioned gentlemen were improvising to the playback of famous Pauline Oliveros, lining this "cooperation by correspondence in creating a 'Troglydite light' piece".

Your correspondent has not been single indignant or irritated comment on the festival, although there were more than enough odd sounds under its vaults. Lev Rubinshtein, also an alternative poet, not only attended the concerts, but even wrote an ode to Alternative.

Moscow June 23, 1993

Dear Ms Oliveros,

May be, this is rather strange way of reminding of someone, but once I gave my friend Anton Batagov a copy of your "Troglydites Delight" and just made a hint that some works (like "Fontana Mix") are sometimes used as a playback. This was enough for the start — and they just did it.

Probably, they used it not in the proper way, but anyone who tried to reach USA from Moscow knows that sometimes it takes a lot of time to reach USA from Moscow would pardon us.

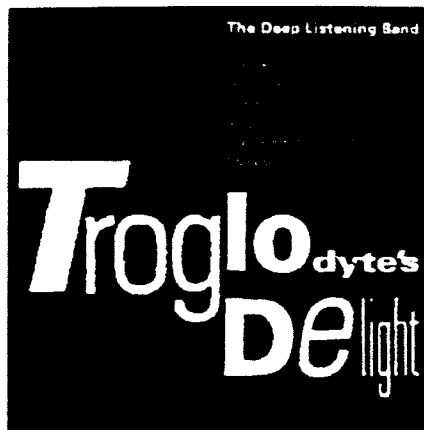
Of course, there were much more reviews in Russian daily press (amazing articles will appear much later), but they are in Russian — all positive.

Anyway, if you wish, we'd send you both the copy of the performance and more press clips.

Thank you, anyway

Sincerely yours

Dmitry Ukhov



THE DEEP LISTENING BAND "Troglodyte's Delight" WN 0003 CD 65'

(What Next, po box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504, Etats-Unis/Distribution Metamkine)

Le DEEP LISTENING BAND (Stuart Dempster: trombone, didgeridoo/Pauline Oliveros: accordéon, voix/Panaiotis: voix) aime confronter son travail à un environnement spécifique (citerne, cathédrale, ...). Ici, le groupe, accompagné de deux invités (Julie Lyon Balliet: voix et Fritz Hauser: percussion), joue dans une grotte ("The Tarpaper Cave"), utilisant les propriétés physiques du lieu, c'est à dire, principalement un jeu avec la résonance naturelle et avec la constante présence de l'eau. Ce jeu est poussé à l'extrême dans "Cannery Row", où c'est la grotte elle-même, qui génère les sons. Les musiciens placent et déplacent des récipients dans lesquels tombent des gouttes d'eau. Le résultat, très percussif, est comparé au piano préparé de Cage: ici, cela devient une grotte préparée!

Cette permanence sonore (les gouttes d'eau) devient un élément à part entière de la musique, qui, elle (il ne faudrait pas l'oublier!), improvisée, se répand, clairsemée, dans l'espace.

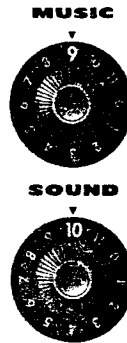
A travers cet enregistrement unique, le groupe fait exister cette grotte l'espace de 65 minutes, avant qu'elle ne retourne dans l'anonymat.

Jérôme NOETINGER

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CAN \$7

US \$5



What's Next? Recordings WN 0003

(For more info, contact the Deep Listening™ Foundation at 914-338-5984.)