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.
Troglydyte’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 Panaitios) 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. Troglydyte’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 Troglydyte’s Delight, a recording which brings an awe of the Beneath into our homes.
Saved — the Alternative Music Festival

By Dmitri Utkin
Syndicated 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 mass music.

The Alternative Music Festival '93 will be held at Radio House, 19, Kachalov, from May 28 to June 1. Over "alternative" was a dangerous word back in 1988 when it had political overtones.

"But not anymore," said the festival's artistic director, Anton Bavatev. "Now, the term is more neutral. 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 a time when even the party apparatchiks were trying to pronounce correctly and convincingly the then "dirty" word avant-garde.

The influence between avant-garde artistic trends and the government apparatus seems to have come 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 period, literally dozens of innovative music groups and trends, ranging from the black to the nouvelle vague, 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 institutions ceased to be interested in further adherence to the neo-psychological school of Ivan Schukov.

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

Opposition will certainly meet when Maxim Terentiev (who runs money for a living) in "Kornia Metallica" (a heavy metal unit), Mikhail Zaykov (of legendary "Zvuki Mu" fame) and Sergei Letov, join French bass player Arski Shilkop (younger offspring of the pop icon Pauline Oliveros)' "Tigroliade's Delight."

Alternative '93, Radio House, 19, Kachalov, Metro Barvikha, May 28, 9 p.m., 2 p.m. Entrance at the door, or 556-3957, 934-3570.

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

Our alternative

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

Olga Pshenichny

Hardly had the relays been staked on the site 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 is enough to raise the Eyebrows of Musicians and Journalists. Now that the relays (but already different, economic ones) have not been erected on the extremity, Alternative has lost itself among the few events 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 broadcast on the radio. Among its inspirers and organizers were musician Dmitri Utkin (founder of the festival) and musician Anton Bavatev (one of the main performers).

Alternative is traditionally not only a growing ground for high-class academic avant-garde but also the venue where musicians of other genres rooted in jazz, rock and new-jazz (new-age was represented for the first time by Valentina Gorbacheva) try their mettle and demonstrate themselves. Among the festival's present-day favorites are Vladimir Martynov, Tro O and Arski Shilkop (whose names are sufficiently known in this country. An excellent performance was put up by the "dark horse" — a quintet from Sweden which performed sax, violin and thoughtful works by R. Beharav. At the concluding concert, when Radio House studio was packed to its limits, all the above-mentioned get-together were improvising to the plucky gramophone. Pauline Oliveros, leading the "cooperation" by creating a "Tigriolede's light" piece.

Your correspondent has not been single and isolated during the entire festival. Although the talk was more than enough odd sounds at its event, Lev Bukhanskikh, also an alternative poet, not only attended a concert, but even wrote an ode.
THE DEEP LISTENING BAND "Troglodyte's Delight" WN OOO3 CD 65°
(What Next. po box 2638. Santa Fe, NM 87504, Etats-Unis/Distribution Metamiphine)
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 Ballet: 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, clarsemée, 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
THE DEEP LISTENING BAND

Trogloedyte's Delight

No producer credited

Engineered by Connie Kieltyka and Bob Bielecki

No mastering credit

What's Next? Recordings WN 0003

Ambiance – you want ambiance? Trogloedyte's Delight is positively dripping with ambiance. Pauline O. and company musically explore the rather wet limestone Tarpaper Cave at Williams Lake Hotel, Rosendale, NY, producing this most primal, soul-stirring CD. We enter the cavern, hearing only water dripping from countless crevices – a thousand points of sound! The sense of height, in particular, is tremendous. The musicians' presence is first heard by their vocalizations – yelps, growls, chirps – the Trog experience is so primordial, so timeless, that it's far beyond just music. These are sensory/subliminal explorations to lose yourself in. "Trog Arena," oozing with the eeriest didjeridu, is a dance of earth and water. This music is a weird, deliciously strange, out-there-very-much-in-there experience.

This is not dry (sorry) academic study; Stuart Dempster put it this way: "I've often thought my work is best when you can't be sure which it is that you're getting; whether it's the meditation or the humor. If the appeal and the appall factor are about equal, then I feel it's the most fun."

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