

SOLIPSISTIC COLLOQUIALISMS OF THE HYPERVOID

record reviews by Michael Bloom

♦ **VARIOUS ARTISTS: The Cassette Mythos Audio Alchemy CD/K7 (What Next?)**

Cassette Mythos has championed the DIY home recording underground for years, and now has produced a couple of more permanent documents, a book and this CD. 21 projects that were originally sold, or more often traded, on cassettes are here represented, with contact addresses to encourage the personal touch that's one of the charms of cassette culture. The selection includes a few people you may have heard of already: confessional songwriter Daniel Johnston reprises a tune from his aptly titled "Songs of Pain" cassette, New York 12-string improviser Sue Ann Harkey leads the "Kitchen Table Ensemble" in a soothing session, *musique concrete* composer John Wiggins crafts a delicate and gorgeous microcosm of sonic manipulations, and the notorious TENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE contributes a slice of life from the laundromat. Every medium that can be indulged in at home—extacting composition, free improvisation, traditional instrumentation, found sounds, computer algorithms, hands-on mess, words or glossolalia or inhuman noise—is being explored by some artist somewhere, and Cassette Mythos is interested in all of it. (PO Box 2638, Santa Fe NM 87506, or write Cassette Mythos, PO Box 2391, Olympia WA 98507) ♦

CROSSWINDS

New Mexico's Newsmonthly

COMPLIMENTARY

Volume V, Number III January/February 1993

Sound Bites

The Cassette Mythos (Audio Alchemy)

When I edited a punk fanzine, I looked forward to the anonymous tapes with crazy Xerox art that magically appeared with the morning's mail. Like the best of these, *The Cassette Mythos* demands your immediate attention, and won't stand to be mere background sound. Here, you can tap into a Universe that roams from downright abrasive noise and acoustic dissonance to radio-turntable experiments or a recording of a zipper clanking around in a dryer. Includes addresses for future networking. Another fine edition by Santa Fe's Nonsequitur Foundation, P. O. Box 2638, SF, NM 87506.

Antonio Lopez

DEAD EYES MAGAZINE seven

THE CASSETTE MYTHOS ALCHEMY (what next)

This is a really wonderful c.d. compilation with beautiful book too! 21 artists are involved and contacts for each one. A breif history of the hometaper scene is included too. I recommend this one for historys sake get it. Artists include MINOY, HOPE ORGAN, JIM STEELE, VOSCH, BAT LENNY and lots more.

Экзотика

МОСКВА №2

* **EXOTICA DIGEST** is illustrated compilation of articles about modern music in all styles. The edition is of 10 000 copies, with volume about 90 pages. Distributed on the former USSR territory.

Audio Alchemy: The Cassette Mythos Compilation 1991 *What Next? WN 0006* 73' 02"

Кассетная революция стала технологическим эквивалентом панк-рока. Основной принцип — все должно происходить здесь и сейчас: если у тебя есть магнитофон, записывай альбом, реализуй свои идеи, не дожидаясь пока появятся высококачественные инструменты и деньги на студию. То, что началось как hometaping, дало мощный созидательный импульс, распространившийся и на другие смежные сферы деятельности. Сегодня кассетная сеть тесно переплетается с mail art, радио и телеискусством, самиздатом, ксерографией, Low Tech видео-артом и многими другими инспирациями в околомузыкальных сферах, связанными с распространением информации и дешевой массовой продукции. Так что кассетная культура, представленная сборником The Cassette Mythos, лишь видимая верхушка айсберга. Тем же, кто интересуется подводной частью, советуем обратиться к книге «Cassette Mythos», выпущенной в Америке издательством Autonomedia, и номерам остинского журнала N-D.

Сборник выпущен без претензий на объективность, идеолог проекта, известный аудио- и перформанс-артист из Бостона Ean White не собирался создавать энциклопедическое исследование интернациональной сцены хомтейпинга, а просто отобрал в соответствии с собственным вкусом более двенадцати артистов, в числе которых: Heather Perkins, Daniel Johnston, John Wiggins, Qubais Ghazala, Sue Ann Harkey, Mystery Labs, Gregory Whitehead, Costes, Minoy, tENTATIVELY a cONVENCE, Phillip Perkins, Solomonoff & Von Hoffmanstahl и др. Благодаря этой причудливой коллекции Вы можете ознакомиться с результатами стихийно возникшей в народе аудиодеятельности, варьирующимися от головокружительных рок-ритмов и изящных поп-мелодий до радикально-шумовых упражнений, сумасшедших коллажей и явной какофонии.

GASJOB

VARIOUS ARTISTS

**The Cassette Mythos Audio Alchemy CD/
K7** ♦

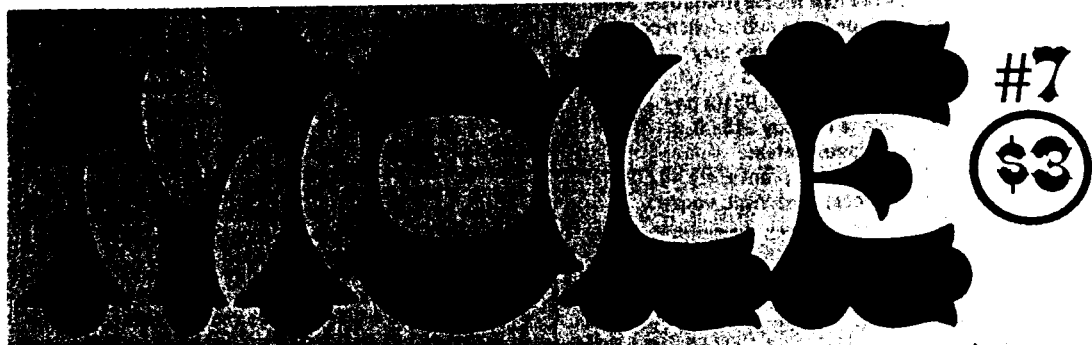
Years and years in the making, and as a document of the world of experimental, independent recording as found in the cassette underground network, I've seen none better. Containing the ranting and whining of Costes, the clothes dryer cycle of Tentatively, a Convenience, the walls of noise of Minoy, the prepared guitar compositions of Sue Ann Harkey's Kitchen Table Ensemble, the playfully fascinating percussion work of Yximalloo, Daniel Johnston's pop agony and much more (including Heather Perkins, Ric E. Braden, Jim Steele, John Wiggins, Qubais Ghazala, Fredrick Longerg-Holm, Solomonoff & Von Hoffmanstahl, Vosch, Phillip Perkis, Tryptic Of A Pastel Fern, Gregory Whitehead, Mystery Laboratory, Bat Lenny, Collapse/Relapse and Hope Organ). Twenty-one artists are represented, complete with contact information and some side comments from the artists. ¿What Next?deserves applause for undertaking this release and for documenting the unique sonic explorations taking place in truly independent recording. [¿What Next?, PO Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504, USA] -*Bryan Baker*

INDUSTRIAL NATION

Issue #7 Spring 1993

The Cassette Mythos Audio Alchemy *(What Next?)*

For those of you scanning life for audio on the edge, may I present it to you. A gold mine of sound havoc here; samples and music and instruments juxtaposed in ways you may have never conceived of. Beyond words. Strange and curious, It's available on CD and cassette. There is a book under the same name (available separately) that is 196 pages of mind melding text and art. You can order it through IN Market Place. The book talks all about cassette art collecting and related materials. As far as the music, we should all know Daniel Johnston as the most popular artist, one of 21 artist/groups represented from all over the globe. Accompanying the CD, the jacket lists each of the artists, bits and pieces about the work, the recording date and an address where you can reach them. The music blew me away from the first time I heard the first piece. It seems to go from accessible, identifiable music to harder stuff, like static walls, but it's all very worthwhile listening. If you have never forayed into the world of truly experimental, this just might be your taxi fare. [kaos] *What Next? Records, P.O. Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504.*



CASSETTE MYTHOS AUDIO AL-
CHEMY (What Next) Great intro to the
cassette culture underground packed w/
neo-industrial noisemeisters from Daniel
Johnston to tentatively a convenience,
Triptic of a Pastel Fern, Costes,
Yximalloo, Minoy, Heather Perkins, etc.
The ones w/vocal trax leap out of the
collection at you, something tangible &
human to grasp in the wandering, liber-
ated fluxus electronics present all over
this fine disc. Great Sue Ann Harkey
packaging too.

N D 17 | Spring 1993

The Cassette Mythos Audio Alchemy [Nonsequitur] (CD 73min) This is the companion to the excellent resource book "Cassette Mythos" by Robin James of cassette artists and the cassette culture. Includes work by: Heather Perkins, Ric E. Braden, Vosch, John Wiggins, Costes, Yximalloo, Frederick Lonberg-Holm, Minóy, Jim Steele, Gregory Whitehead, and many others who have been active with cassettes. Various sounds and styles combine to form a rush of energy. Informative and attractive booklet is a real plus as well which helps to highlight this dedicated effort. Simply great. (D.P.)

NOTES

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Avril 92
25 Frs

LE MAGAZINE DES AUTRES MUSIQUES

MYTHOS

AUDIO ALCHEMY

(What next WN 0006)

La compilation cassette reste l'espace idéal pour la diffusion de musiques " faites à la maison ". " Mythos " explore ces univers sonores sous toutes leurs formes. Ici un piano bastringue nasillard côtoie le rock saturé de COSTES, des bip électroniques ou de la pop répétitive. Comme nombre de ses consoeurs cette cassette (également disponible en CD) souffre d'une direction artistique beaucoup trop souple ; il en résulte un assemblage disparate et de nombreux participants restent trop complaisants vis à vis de leur travaux. Quelques uns se distinguent néanmoins par un travail plus conséquent : Jim STEELE, YXIMALLOO (groupe japonais dans la lignée des RESIDENTS), MYSTERY LABORATORY ainsi que SOLOMONOFF & VON HOFFMANSTAHL. Contact : PO Box 2391. Olympia WA 98507 U.S.A.

Alain De FILIPPIS

OPTION

NO. 44
MAY 1994

● **AUDIO ALCHEMY: The Cassette Mythos Compilation** Since 1985, the Cassette Mythos gang has used the mail (both computerized and conventional) to share its wares on cassette (at least with each other). Editor/producer Ean White apologizes in the liner notes for the necessarily haphazard nature of the anthology of contributors, and the mad diversity of sounds presented. But he needn't have bothered; while the one- to six-minute samples can't do more than hint at the work of the 21 artists and ensembles they represent, the overall effect is quite dazzling, like the highspeed kaleidoscope ride in *2001*. Things change so quickly that you don't so much hear the songs as feel yourself being jerked about; and the arguable excesses of any of the musics represented (minimalist, electronic, rapid montage) collapse into the sheer rush of sounds. The things that stand out are, of course, among the weirdest: Ric E. Braden's "Columbus Avenue, 10 PM," which sounds like overlaid nature recordings of a dog lapping water and a beaver gnawing wood; Daniel Johnston's appropriately titled "Grievances," whose rickety stand-up piano and effectively primitive, in-your-face production makes you want to leave the room; Yximaloo's "China-Pong," a playful, Zorn-like audio cartoon; and the sampled frisky fido on Solomonoff and Von Hoffmanstahl's "Banzai Noir." (What Next?, Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504) — David Shirley

THE WIRE

MUSIC NOW AND ALL WAYS

SIDE ONE

33 $\frac{1}{3}$ RPM

ISSUE 100 JUNE 1992

£1.95 \$5.00

VARIOUS AUDIO ALCHEMY/THE CASSETTE MYTHOS COMPILATION CD/K7 (*What Next? Recordings* WN0006) For everyone, from everywhere, bypassing corporate media – the mid-80s global cassette tape exchange-network gathered together, for once, a milieu in which cult singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston, despite regular institutionalisation for his and the public safety, is actually one of the straighter voices encountered. Heather Perkins' looped saxes, Jim Steele's machine-like sound-collage, John Wiggins' computer-timbral meditations, Solomonoff and Von Hoffmanstahl's radio-static multi-speed improv, and much much more. Hunt this down.



YOUR FLESH

Then we come to the *Cassette Mythos Audio Alchemy* CD, and its accompanying book *Cassette Mythos*, which in tandem attempt to make sense of the vast "cassette culture." The cassette culture, for the uninitiated, is a sprawling network of suppressed "geniuses" like myself who record our music in basements, bedrooms, shower stalls and tiny clubs and then "release" the music on cassette with xeroxed or handmade covers, zero distribution and mostly other networkers as customers/fans. Some artists have grown from the cassette culture into the semi-underground: Daniel Johnston, the Pain Teens, Eugene Chadbourne, and Amy Denio, to name a few...but the work presented here—on the CD, a beautifully disparate, diverse collection of noises, songs, hums, and neo-isms of every stripe; in the book, a hopelessly unassigned pile of how-to's, philosophies, personal histories and awakenings—is of such wildly varying quality and intensity that it effectively serves to represent the culture itself, a crazed, frustrating, unpredictable phenomenon that you'll love one minute and want to set fire to the next—which, in this humble participant/observer's opinion, is more accurate than any of the contributors could have ever hoped. Notable, also, is Daniel Johnston's bone-chilling version of "Grievances" on the CD; Amy Denio's ethereal, timely essay in the book; and the fact that luminary Robin James put the whole thing together. [Respectively: Trance Syndicate/Subelectrick Institute/What Next?/Autonomedia] *Patrick Barber*