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LEHN / SCHMICKLER

Marcus Schmickler - *computer*
Thomas Lehn - *analogue synthesizer*

The real-virtual analogue-digital electronic duo of Marcus Schmickler and Thomas Lehn has been working since its first meeting in December 1998 during the German premiere of the Music in Movement Electronic Orchestra (aka MIMEO) in Cologne. They have been extensively touring in Europe, the USA and Japan and performed at Experimental Intermedia/NYC, Mills/Oakland, Bard College, Lampo/Chicago, Princeton University, Festival Wittener Tage fuer Neue Kammermusik, AMPLIFY/Tokyo, CCA/Glasgow, Darmstadt and many other known presenters of contemporary and electronic music. They released several successful CD and vinyl productions on labels such as Erstwhile Records, a-musik and Editions Mego. Most recently they published their fifth duo album *Neue Bilder* on Mikroton.

discography

- 2017 *Neue Bilder* [CD] | mikroton CD 60 | Mikroton | www.mikroton.net
- 2011 *Live Double Séance [Antaa Kalojen Uida]* [LP+DVD] | eMEGO 121 | Editions MEGO | www.editionsmego.com
Contains stereo vinyl LP and DTS 5.1 Surround Sound DVD (audio only).
- 2009 *Navigation im Hypertext* [CD] | A34 | a-musik | www.a-musik.com
- 2009 *Kölner Kranz* [LP] | A31 | a-musik | www.a-musik.com
- 2000 *Bart* [CD] | erst 012 | erstwhile records | www.erstwhilerecords.com

further releases

- 2010 *Noise of Cologne* [CD] Mark e.V.
- 2004 *Rowe / Nakamura / Lehn / Schmickler* [CD] | EL002 | erstwhile | www.erstwhilerecords.com
- 2003 *Rabbit Run* (with Keith Rowe) [CD] erst 027 | erstwhile | www.erstwhilerecords.com
- 2003 *AMPLIFY 2002: balance box set* [7 CDs/1 DVD] | erst 033-040 | erstwhile | erstwhilerecords.com
CD3 (erst 35) Lehn/Schmickler/Rowe | CD4 (erst 36) Lehn/Schmickler

releases with MIMEO (Music In Movement Electronic Orchestra)

- 2011 *Wigry* [2LP] BR LP01 | Bôlt Records | www.boltrecords.pl
- 2007 *sight* [CD] cath004 | Cathnor Recordings | www.cathnor.bandcamp.com
- 2004 *Lifting Concrete Lightly* [3CD] SGCD1 | Serpentine Gallery | www.serpentinegallery.org
- 2003 *The Hands of Caravaggio* with John Tilbury [CD] erst 021 | erstwhile records | www.erstwhilerecords.com
- 2000 *Electric Chair + Table* [2CD] GROB 206/7 | GROB | www.churchofgrob.com

press

This latest offering from the duo of analogue synth virtuoso Thomas Lehn and laptop whizkid Marcus Schmickler – the pair's fourth, after 2000's *Bart on Erstwhile* and 2008's *Kölner Kranz* and *Navigation Im Hypertext* on A-Musik – comes both as a vinyl (another handsome platter from Berlin's *Dubplates & Mastering*) and as a Surround Sound DVD, and it's almost worth your while buying the 5.1 gear just for the pleasure of blowing it through the fuckin' roof with this live six-channel recording of a concert last November at the Äänen Lumo Festival for New Sounds in Helsinki (before you ask, no I didn't shell out for the extra speakers myself - I went and listened to the DVD at a friend's, though I'm not sure he considers me as a friend anymore now). The spatialization isn't some hip afterthought of Marcus Schmickler's either - though having heard some of the wonders that have emerged from his Piethopraxis Tonstudio over the years, I wouldn't have been surprised if it were - it really sounded like that live. And for once the "no editing, no mixing" tagline really impresses. ... Whether they did it in real time or not, this is composition - nay, architecture - of the highest order. The musicianship is truly sensational, but be warned: the only way to catch the myriad nuances is to pump up the volume as loud as it'll go - this is one of those thrillers that like *Sheer Hellish Miasma* makes no sense whatsoever if your neighbours aren't kicking the door down. It's worth a new door, in my opinion. Hell, it's worth a Surround Sound system too - how many shopping days to Christmas?

- Dan Warburton | Paris Transatlantic

Surely nothing could better highlight the absurdity of genre categorisation than having premier analogue synth improviser Thomas Lehn and John Beltran in same column. *Live Double Séance* is the fourth album documenting Lehn's duo with Schmickler, whose work in the digital realm evinces a similar rigour and inventiveness. Recorded live in a sea fortress in Helsinki, the performance shifts between the hesitant squiggles and quietly blossoming drones of their early exchanges into what could be categorised as harsh noise. One of the great things about the duo is the way they refuse to settle into assigned roles - at times Lehn's percussive white noise interjections push the music towards something very loosely resembling Techno, while Schmickler's sonic treatments have a distinctly 1950s *concrète* feel.

- The Wire

The artists' clairvoyance is explicated by chains of supernatural jumbles and last-ditch galactic discontinuities. '*Navigation im Hypertext*' - "tranquil" parts included, and there are many - hurts our awareness viciously, sounding seriously conceived throughout. Suitable as a detached commentary on the collapse of human efforts and illusions. (...) '*Koelner Kranz*' is imbued of pure sonic guerrilla. Incessantly violent outbursts of loud stridencies and repeated consecrations at the altar of discordant harmonics certify, once and for all, that Lehn and Schmickler are not going to accept any measure of compromise, and that those who manage to swallow these releases in succession are worthy of my utmost respect. (...) Two important chapters in the updated book on the art of nonfigurative noise, obvious must-haves for both artists' supporters.

- Massimo Ricci | Temporary Fault

Thomas Lehn and Marcus Schmickler bring another sort of intensity to the festival (*Amplify 2002/Tokyo*); too fractured and frenetic for even the suggestion of narrative, their firestorm volleys and knob-ripping synth wrangling succeeds on the merits of its own unstoppable, hyperactive energy. Like frazzled supercomputers spluttering out hunks of ingenious code, they tumble through more ideas in minutes than many groups do in years without losing focus or degrading into senseless blurting.

- Joe Panzner | Stylus Magazine

It is precisely in the contrast between tight control and raw, unfocussed energy that Thomas Lehn and Marcus Schmickler's collaboration lies. Packaged in the appropriately lo-tech, glitch-graphics of Cologne designer Heike Sperling lies an hour-long release of stuttering free-form glitch funk. What differentiates '*Bart*' however, from the myriad of recent glitch-improvisation releases is its ruthless attention to detail. Both Schmickler and Lehn are well known within their respective circles and the results of this, their first collaboration, are stunning to say the least.

- Christopher Murphy | fällt

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sites

www.piethopraxis.org

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