

Conference:
EuroNoize – Art Bands, DiY Music and Cultural Identity in an Age of Transnational Mobility
21.09.18
University of Reading

This conference is the first iteration of EuroNoize, a collaborative project held between the University of Reading, Kunsthall Oslo and A.R.E. Prague and funded by the European Commission. The project aims to explore the history and existing practices of the DiY music scene in Europe and beyond, to evaluate this particular form of artistic production alongside other contemporary aesthetic modes, to consider its historical and current relationship to art education (the art band emerging from art school) and to consider the social, economic and cultural structures that shape it in the present. In this context, we will be exploring the relationship between a global (predominantly Anglo-Saxon) culture industry and localised and independent nodes of production. This one-day conference is serve as a starting point in generating a theoretical discussion around an artistic and musical genre that is rarely given enough attention in art criticism.

Themes include:

- * The art band as a genre of contemporary art and in relation to other contemporary post-studio art disciplines such as performance, sound art, art writing etc.
- * Art education / art school as DiY band incubator (both historically and under increasingly neo-liberalized conditions).
- * DiY music scenes as interfaces between the local and the global
- * Forms of hybridity and points of tension between hegemonic American culture industry and local identity.
- * Local (oral) histories and myths: archiving DiY music.
- * The relationship between the technical means of production in music and independence – DiY or lo-fi as an aesthetic position.
- * Changes to independent music production under neoliberal conditions (gentrification, platform-capitalism, precarious labour).
- * Race and post-colonial identities: DiY music as form of political resistance.
- * Gender and the performance of gendered roles in music.

More about EuroNoize:

EuroNoize is a project researching the relationship between art and DiY music scenes in Europe across several platforms. At the heart of the EuroNoize project is an alternative music showcase modeled on the Eurovision Song Contest, in which musicians will be invited to consider the interplay of local and global identities in representing their country with a specially commissioned song and video. The live event in London will be streamed online and broadcast at partner venues. Viewers will be able to vote digitally for the winning entry. This is accompanied by a conference at the University of Reading, exploring the histories connecting DiY music and the visual arts and investigating the challenges inherent in formalising the informal networks upon which this cultural activity is built. Conference proceedings will lead to a publication in which these themes will be expanded. Finally, the music produced for this live event will be released as a record and disseminated internationally together with the book and an exhibition at Kunsthall Oslo. The project's explicit aim is to think of and implement strategies and modes of cooperation between art institutions, DiY musicians and internally between various bands across the continent to facilitate the continuation of these often short-lived practices. In doing so, the project investigates the way European co-operation transcends borders and raises questions about the meaning (and sound) of cultural identity in an age of transnational mobility.

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Timetable:

9:30 Coffee and registration
10:00 Pil and Galia Kollektiv: Introduction
10:30 Philip Auslander: Glam Rock, Fashion, and DIY
11:15 Bryan Biggs: The Art School Dance Goes On Forever
11:45 Sarah Lowndes: Nice Style: Self-Fashioning in Post-Punk Glasgow Art Bands
12:15 Plenary
13:00 Lunch
14:00 Chris Bohn: The Academy Imperils
14:30 Paula Guerra: Pretty in Pink or The Black is the New Pink: post-colonial identities and DIY music as form of political and social resistance
15:00 Stephanie Phillips: Decolonising Punk: What it means to redefine punk within racial identity
15:30 plenary
16:00 Coffee break
16:30 Simon Reynolds: DIY – then, now, tomorrow
17:00 Matt Worley: Whip In My Valise: British Punk and the Marquis de Sade, c.1975–85
17:30 Plenary
18:00 Finish

Abstracts and Bios:

Pil and Galia Kollektiv

Introducing the central themes for EuroNoize, project co-ordinators Pil and Galia Kollektiv will address questions around migration, translation and appropriation. DIY music is caught between the ethos of art and the market of the music industry, between Anglo-Saxon cultural markers and local European identities and between a sense of spectacle and a poverty of means of production. It is these tensions and contradictions that define it as a unique cultural activity that, because of these structural fissures at its base, rarely receives due recognition and institutional support.

Pil and Galia Kollektiv are artists, writers and curators working in collaboration. Their work together addresses the legacy of modernism and the relationship between art and politics. They have had solo shows at Centre Clark, Montreal, Naughton Gallery, Belfast, Pump House Gallery, London, Te Tuhi Center for the Arts, New Zealand and The Showroom Gallery, London. They have also presented live work at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the 5th Montreal Biennial and Kunsthall Oslo. Their band WE extends their interrogation of the construction of individuality and collectivity. They are the directors of artist run project space xero, kline & coma and work as lecturers in Fine Art at the University of Reading, the Royal College of Art and the CASS School of Art.

Philip Auslander

British Glam Rock of the early 1970s cannot properly be said to have been DIY music. It was produced as commercial product by industry professionals, albeit professionals mostly at the early stages of their careers. The outlandish, gender-bending appearances glam rockers assumed through clothing and make-up might appear to reflect a DIY aesthetic, but were in reality largely the work of professional designers and stylists. In this respect, Glam both carries on a tradition well established in rock since the 1950s and anticipates the tight connection between music and fashion in Punk. Glam's openness to the performers' newly created, highly mutable on-stage identities, their musical

personae, and the relative absence of an established norm for the glam rock persona were unprecedented. It is here that the DIY impulse could find expression in Glam.

Philip Auslander is a Professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Atlanta, Georgia, USA). He teaches primarily in the areas of Performance Studies, Media Studies, Popular Music, and Screen Acting. His books include *Presence and Resistance: Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in Contemporary American Performance* (University of Michigan Press, 1992), *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (Routledge, 1999; 2nd edition 2008), and *Performing Glam Rock: Gender and Theatricality in Popular Music* (University of Michigan Press, 2006). The University of Michigan Press published Auslander's sixth book, *Reactivations: Essays on Performance and Its Documentation*, in the spring of 2018. Auslander has written art criticism for *ArtForum* and other publications and regularly contributes essays to exhibition catalogs for museums in Europe and North America. He is the founding editor of *The Art Section: An Online Journal of Art and Cultural Commentary*, published regularly at www.theartsection.com. He is also a working screen actor.

Bryan Biggs

A contemporary of Liverpool art school band, Deaf School, in the 1970s, I have charted the interaction between art and music, particularly pop, over several decades, through exhibitions and publications. This presentation will draw on some of these, including live art commissions *Live from the Vinyl Junkyard* and *Mixing It* (1996/97), which featured Jeremy Deller's *Acid Brass*; a contemporary recreation of the Sgt Pepper LP cover tableau (1997), interrogating cultural icons, appropriation and plagiarism; a documentary exhibition (2013) to accompany Paul Du Noyer's book, *Deaf School: The Non-Stop Pop Art Punk Rock Party*; and a *Captain Beefheart Weekend* (2017) that included a symposium considering him as a 'total artist' who blurred distinctions between his music, art, poetry and performance. Using these and other examples, the talk will argue for the continuing vitality of a range of 'popular' musics to inform, enliven and disrupt visual arts practice.

Bryan Biggs is Artistic Director of Bluecoat, Liverpool's centre for the contemporary arts, where he has a long track record as exhibitions curator and commissioner of live art and interdisciplinary work, taking in visual art, music, dance and literature, as well as arts participation. He also led on a large-scale capital development of the building, which then played a prominent role in Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture, 2008. He is currently working on an extensive archive project charting Bluecoat's transformation from 18th century charity school to the UK's first arts centre in the 20th century, and editing a book exploring this history. He has written for and edited many publications, including *Live from the Vinyl Junkyard*, *Aspects of Elvis*, *Malcolm Lowry: From the Mersey to the World*, and *Liverpool, City of Radicals*. A fine art graduate of Liverpool Polytechnic, he continues to do a drawing every day, and DJ's occasionally.

Sarah Lowndes

In this paper, Sarah Lowndes will discuss the inter-related art and music scenes of Glasgow in the post-punk era, paying particular attention to the lyrics, personal style and artwork of bands including Orange Juice, Strawberry Switchblade, The Pastels, Franz Ferdinand, Life Without Buildings, Correcto and Muscles of Joy. The paper will consider the art band as a genre of contemporary art, in relation to other contemporary post-studio art disciplines so prevalent in the Glasgow art scene, such as performance, sound art and art writing.

Dr. Sarah Lowndes is a writer, curator and Research Fellow at Norwich University of the Arts. Previously, Lowndes was a lecturer at Glasgow School of Art (2002–2015) and she has written extensively on the grassroots art and music scenes of Glasgow, notably in her book *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (2010). Her other publications include *Contemporary Artists Working Outside the City: Creative Retreat* (2018), *The DIY Movement in Art, Music and Publishing: Subjugated Knowledges* (2016) and *All Art is Political: Writings on Performative Art* (2014). Her curatorial projects include *Studio 58: Women Artists in Glasgow Since World War II* (Mackintosh Museum, Glasgow, 2012), *The Glasgow Weekend: Art, Design and Music from Glasgow* (Volk-buehne and BQ, Berlin, 2013) and the prose, poetry and art journal *The Burning Sand* (2013–2016).

Chris Bohn

Fuck off Foucault... In "I'd rather choose The curb": Topographical Writing In Recent German Punk, a writer named Dennis Borghardt quotes some "significant and surprising lines" from Michel Foucault's "Of Other Spaces". Like, is this pensée from a late French thinker really the best place to start an essay about German punk? Dennis Borghardt's essay is also the opening chapter of *Beyond No Future: Cultures Of German Punk* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016). Nowhere does this book about German punk account for Abwärts, possibly the greatest, most sardonic and savagely satirical of all West German punk groups. This paper celebrates the music of an overlooked group, formed in Hamburg in 1979, and treats them as exemplars of the West German punk explosion that seeded modern Germany's vibrant popular culture without any help from the academy or the state's cultural bureaucrats.

Chris Bohn is Editor-in-Chief of *The Wire*. He has been associated with the magazine, first as a freelance contributor and later as a staff member, since the mid-1980s. Before then he worked for the UK music weeklies *NME* and *Melody Maker*. Writing mostly under the name Biba Kopf, he has also contributed to *The Guardian*, *City Limits*, *Time Out Film Guide* and Berlin's city magazine *Tip* among other periodicals. In 1993 he wrote the documentary *Laibach: A Film From Slovenia*.

Paula Guerra

In the last decade, the post-subcultural framework has opened a fundamental gap in the study of youth cultures, namely underground music scenes and DIY cultures. This window of opportunities – also known as cultural turn – has allowed three major advances in social theory: the re-examination of classical subcultural analysis through the introduction of critical variables of gender, ethnicity, social networks and subcultural aging, among others; on the other hand, it has allowed the unveiling and relevance of hybridisms and transglobal crosses between genres and musical subgenres (rrriot punk, funk, tecnobrega, sertanejo, reggaeton, electro guerrilla), as well as the pertinence of these artistic and musical creations as forms of alternative economy and insertion in the market via the underground; and the emergence of these artistic and musical productions in the sphere of the DIY ethos as a form of political and social resistance. Thus, considering the collectives of musical actors in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Fortaleza, Recife, Teresina, Juiz de Fora and Porto Alegre interviewed between 2017 and 2018, we intend to demonstrate the empirical relevance and urgency of these three dimensions of approach and their relevance to the renewal of social theory about popular music and the contemporary construction of social identities in a local, trans-global and virtual sphere.

Paula Guerra is PhD in Sociology from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto (FL-UP). She is an Associate Professor on the Department of Sociology and

yet also harnessing the creative impulses of millions for corporate ends. Is it possible to speak now of the Spectacle 2.0? What is the future hold for the ideal and actuality of do-it-yourself culture?

Simon Reynolds is the author of eight books about pop culture, including *Rip It Up and Start Again: Postpunk 1978–84* (2005), *Energy Flash: A Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture* (1998), *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past* (2011) and most recently *Shock and Awe: Glam Rock and its Legacy* (2016). He started his career as a music critic at *Melody Maker*, where he was a staff writer during the late Eighties. Since then he has freelanced for magazines including *The Wire*, *Pitchfork*, *Village Voice*, *The Guardian*, *Artforum*, and *Frieze*. He also operates a number of blogs centred around the hub *Blissblog*. Born in London, a resident of New York during much of the 1990s and 2000s, Reynolds currently lives in Los Angeles.

Matt Worley

British punk emerged in tandem with the formation of Sex Pistols, a band framed by a style and an aesthetic constructed, in part, by Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood via their London shop *SEX* (1974–76). The shop displayed fetishwear and accoutrements designed to fuse youth and sexual subcultures, deploying sex as a cultural weapon to provoke and confront. This article examines the Sadean influences that found expression through punk, suggesting that the Marquis de Sade had a seminal if diffused impact on the punk-informed cultures that evolved through the 1970s into the 1980s. Though often indirect – and bound to broader interpretations of sexual behaviour – the actions, aesthetics and ideas associated with Sade seemingly tallied with the 'mood' of a country caught in a period of socio-economic and political change.

Matthew Worley is professor of modern history at the University of Reading. He has written widely on punk-related cultures, including articles of *Contemporary British History*, *History Workshop*, *Popular Music* and *Twentieth Century British History*, and the monograph *No Future: Punk, Politics and British Youth Culture, 1976–84* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). He is a co-founder of the Subcultures Network, for which he has contributed to such books as *Ripped, Cut and Torn: Pop, Politics and Punk Fanzines from 1976* (Manchester University Press, 2018).