

SERIOUS SERIOUS INTERVIEWS SAVVA TEREITYEV

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You've mentioned that playing in the tunnel was in part because of your financial condition. Still, I guess, for you it wasn't merely plain need, right?

Right. The impulse to go out and perform in that pedestrian subway (...Only streetlights and the grating of gravel in pedestrian subways...*) first emerged from quite an earthly matter—the necessity to improve the instantaneous financial condition. As there was no income planned for the following two weeks and I was already broke, the space offered a chance to at least have something to feed from. Still, it was also my love for playing in huge spaces with long echo that added meaning to the whole affair. This opportunity to use such ambience is not there every day, so I just took advantage of the situation and went there to rehearse some of my ideas and sketches, as well as to practise the melodica.

By this release, did you aim to change the attitude towards street musicians in general?

* Ulver, Porn Piece Or The Scars Of Cold Kisses

Ha-ha! Never. Though there are all kinds of street musicians working in all possible genres—hm, never saw a busking death metal singer; in the States maybe? Florida?—I’m not constantly in this business. It happened many times in my life that I was playing outside, but it never was a priority or any kind of a goal. So I do not perceive myself as a typical street musician. If there exists typical, at all. Nevertheless, it seems most people perceive street musicians as some kind of beggars. And this can be both true and untrue.

True, because when one is wealthy enough he might not be willing to play in the street and entertain the passersby in the sweat of his brow. Only if he’s broke.

I mean, for many artists—not only artists, though—it’s a struggle to be entertaining. But since the audience often pays only for being entertained, the musicians in turn provide what they’re being paid for, regardless of what they really wish to stand for in music.

And thus comes the endless repetition of the pop tunes, classical ones, favourite movie melodies and so on—the easiest and most obvious way to draw attention and hopefully a penny. Please understand me correctly: I’ve nothing at all against entertainment, in music as well. I grew up with the music of the greatest entertainers in

history: James Brown, Barry White, Michael Jackson—many more and you know them all. But I never felt they were selling themselves. I assume it was just their natural way of expression, which not any musician can share. In fact, much less than all those employed in the entertainment industry. So in this context I prefer to remain my own self, a bad entertainer—as bad as I’m with shoe-making, house-construction or spaceship-directing—but a devoted explorer of the space acoustics, drones, noises and other natural details which surround us from the moment of birth to the last breath, but which mostly remain unnoticed. I always strive to do my best to keep the music most relevant to the moment here-and-now and neglect the possible outside demand to please. Of course, it’s only good if by accident I also happen to be entertaining at the same time.

Contrary to amuser-for-sale types, there are true hard-working artists, who’s goal is to sharpen their skills and become only better. And you know, it takes a shitload of time and effort and not everyone can afford it when he’s not supported money-wise from the outside.

Hence, performing in the streets is a way to use time in a more efficient manner: one cultivates the best of his own self and gets a penny in the meantime.

Would you say that different elements of the recording—the ambience, noises, passersby, the music itself—are in some sort of hierarchical relation to each other?

I would say that speculations on the hierarchy of elements which compose the given recording—if the music is of more importance than the noises or vice versa—will diminish the chances for the listener to enjoy the whole. More than that I don't feel to have the right or, let's say, to be in the position to forward any instructions of such kind.

Can we really classify this release as field recording?
To what extent was it rehearsed or how different is it from what you play in the tunnel normally, when there's nobody recording you?

Well, we did three recordings on the spot. And concerning the direction it is true that we shared ideas and had some discussions with the record producer between the takes. Still, those ideas were not artificial, but appeared naturally from how we both felt the space and the music. So the adjustments that naturally appeared by the time of the third take only helped to make it better. Look, when there's no record on, I only have to think of the very moment, nothing more. But when being recorded, wasn't it better to keep in mind, that from now on the very moment stops being the one & only, and that it's doomed to be repeated over and over again in any here and any now? I don't have a ready answer myself, but it's true that I could not let this very thought go during the session. At the same time, I feel the idea is still there—the whole piece remained a spontaneous improvisation, unaffected by any instructions or orders from a director—it's just my consciousness

which was spread a bit wider, on a wider range of tasks, let's say.

Few months have past since the recording process in the tunnel. What are you working on currently?

Thank you very much for your interest. There are two projects I'd love to tell you about briefly. The main one, which is taking most of the time, is a sheet-music publishing company I'm starting at the moment. One contract is already signed and in process, which is with Mr. David Tibet and Mr. Michael Cashmore of Current 93 whom I'm very happy to deal with. To follow this and other projects one can visit my webpage—introspective.ru—with updates and contact and other related stuff.

At the same time, I'm writing an ambient music piece for piano, melodica, voice and electronics, which is designed as the most beautiful music to sleep with. (Everything is subjective, of course.) It's already partly recorded but some more recording sessions are planned for spring and summer so the work will take time.