

CYCLICAL

Magazine

INTERVIEW:

IAN BODDY

GEAR:

- DE LA PUTA
ELECTRONICS
BASS.DRONE.
MACHINE
- DOEPFER A-101-
1 VACTROL VCF

ALBUM REVIEW:

BEGEGNUNGEN (ICH
SEHE DICH) BY
BERND-MICHAEL
LAND

**TOP 12
RELEASES:**

OCTOBER 2023



GEAR:

DOEPFER

A-101-1

VACTROL VCF

Introduction:

The A-101-1 Vactrol VCF from Doepfer is a unique take on the Steiner filter circuit from 1974. Like the original it features 2-pole low pass, 2-pole band pass and 2-pole high pass circuits. Unlike the original this filter utilizes vactrols instead of diodes. Vactrols have a slower, smoother response and behave in a less linear manner.

Having used a number of Steiner-Parker (also known as Sallen-Key) filters I've been eager to try Doepfer's interpretation. Beginning in 1975 with the Synthacon and continuing today with the Arturia Brute line of synthesizers, it's a legendary design. Many options are available in Eurorack as well from Tiptop Audio, Manhattan Analog, EMW and others.

In use:

At first I found the character of the A-101-1 to be subdued; likely on account of the vactrols. At medium

settings I heard less edge and bite than I was expecting. The resonance, while unpredictable, felt rounder generally. However at extreme settings the Steiner-Parker character revealed itself. When overdriven the A-101-1 can be thick, dark, gritty and bubbly.

In use I found the A-101-1 quite pleasing with mid or high frequency content (as is usually the case with a 2-pole filter). The band pass circuit seemed especially suited for open, airy sounds; with a nice edge as resonance increases. The high pass circuit had similar characteristics. Low pass mode left me wanting until I ventured into overdrive territory. **There I was met with thick, warm, bubbly sounds.** The difference was night and day and changed my entire opinion of the filter.

Features:

What sets the A-101-1 apart from the competition is versatility. It has a unique take on the multi-mode design (called "multitype" by Doepfer). Each filter circuit is normalised to the next filter circuit, with separate mix knobs for each; meaning if you patch into the low pass filter circuit that signal will be passed along to the other filter circuits and you can mix them together. Or you can patch different signals into each filter circuit directly and mix those together. It's a novel design worthy

of exploration.

Additionally, there are three cutoff CV inputs (two with attenuators) and two resonance CV inputs (one with an attenuator). Also, you have both the original output circuit (which grows louder with resonance) and a modified output circuit (which maintains a more consistent level).

Critiques:

What I feel hampers the unique multi-mode design is the lack of separate cutoff knobs for each filter circuit. There is only one cutoff knob which controls all three filter circuits simultaneously (typical for a multi-mode filter, but this is not your typical multi-mode filter). Why not forgo two of the CV attenuators for two more cutoff knobs? Perhaps it's a limitation of the overall circuit design. That said, all those CV attenuators allow for thorough modulation and free up other modules in the rack.

For everyday use I found the A-101-1 works best utilizing one filter circuit at a time. That's not to say there aren't plenty of atypical uses; especially given the ability to mix multiple signals thru different filter circuits. Additionally, you can create a shallow notch filter by mixing one signal thru all three filter circuits in equal amounts.

Build Quality:

As usual for Doepfer build quality is superb. The knobs are sturdy, well-spaced and well-sized. The jacks are firm. The labeling is clear and useful. The front panel is metal and comes in either silver or black. The signal path has a clean, vintage tone at mild settings and a warm, full, gritty sound at extreme settings. Rack screws and a power cable are included.

Conclusion:

The A-101-1 is an excellent interpretation of a Steiner-Parker filter. While it may be overkill for casual use, an enthusiast will appreciate its versatility and broad palette. It's well suited to any patch one might have in mind; from soft, delicate sounds to earth-shaking bass and beyond. The use of vactrols gives it a slightly smoother tone but doesn't diminish the character one would expect; especially at extreme settings. While the "multitype" design feels somewhat hampered by the lack of separate cutoff knobs, it also lends well to experimentation. If you're a fan of the Steiner-Parker tone I can easily recommend this filter. For a smaller footprint with comparable tone I recommend the Tiptop Audio Forbidden Planet.

Specifications:

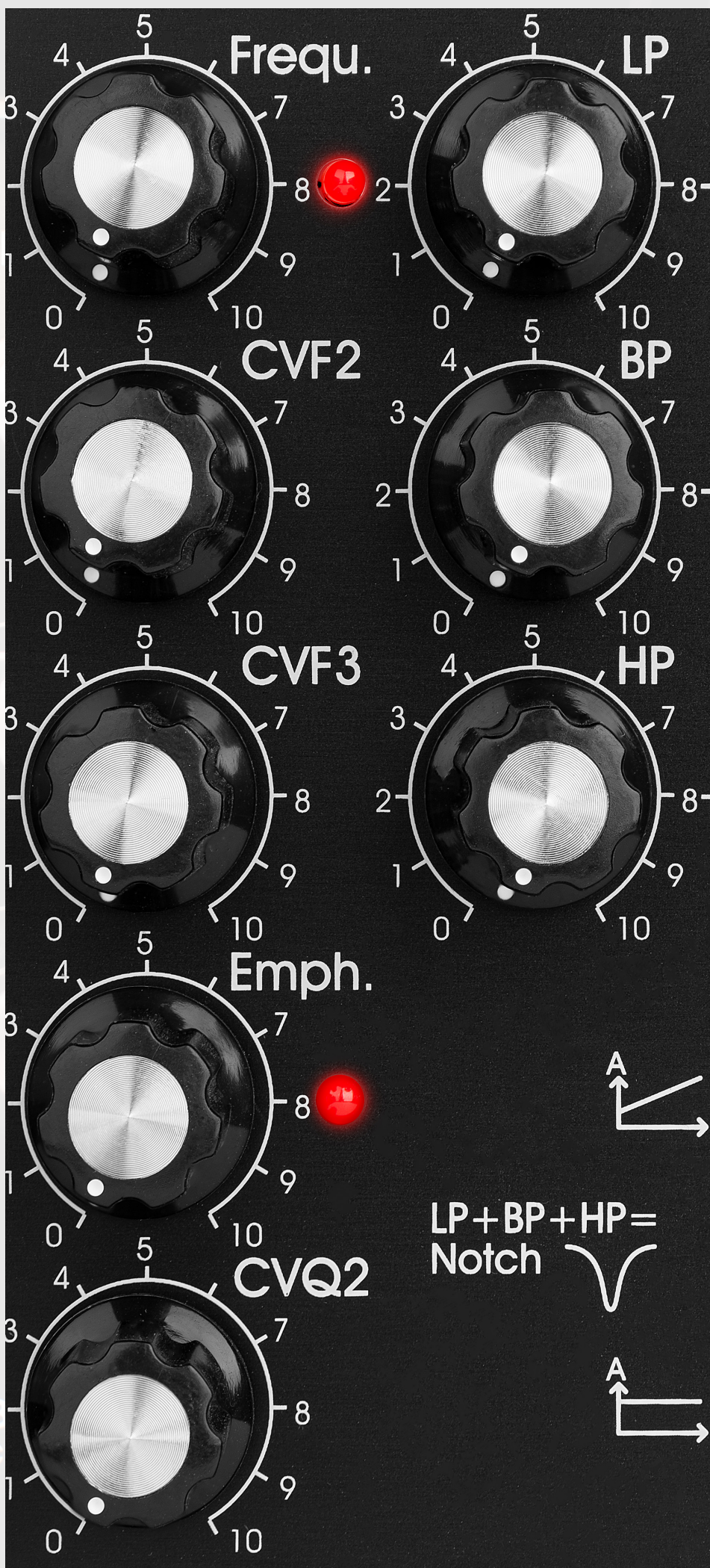
Inputs- 3 audio, 5 CV
Outputs- 2 mono
Current – 30 mA +12V, 30 mA -12V, 0 mA 5V
Depth- 50mm
Width- 16HP
MSRP- €155-€175

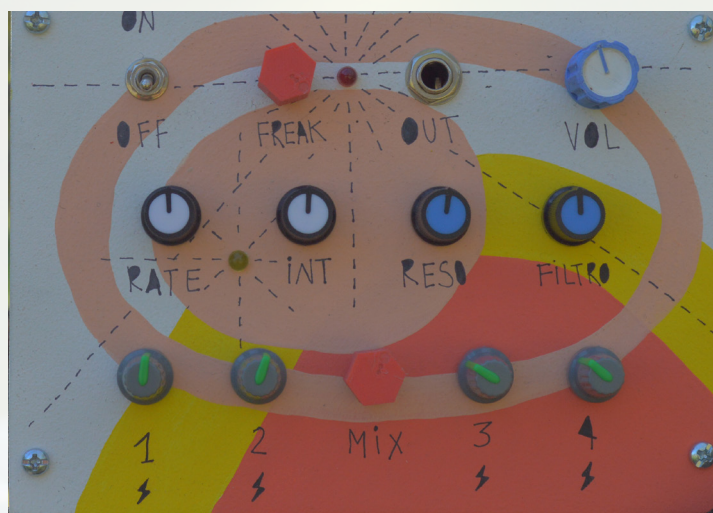
Notes:

For a video demonstration please visit:

<https://youtu.be/o3lvWW6P7Pk>

Aaron Russell





GEAR: DE LA PUTA_ ELECTRONICS BASS. DRONE. MACHINE

De la Puta electronics is a small company-collective currently based in Argentina that has been developing electronic musical instruments for almost 10 years.

Since the first models always had a handmade approach; custom-made, eco-friedly. Mainly it can be highlighted an experimental search for new interfaces and development of non-conventional instruments.

A sound and visual artist and an electronic music producer are behind every detail when it comes to giving life to each sound object that comes out of their workshop: everything is handmade, no two instruments are the same.

The Bass.Drone.Machine is one of their best-received designs in the production of ambient, noise and experimental music. Its simple de-

sign (4 powerful full range oscillators with an ingenious balance and mix matrix between them, plus a rudimentary square wave LFO and a resonant low pass filter) results in an ocean of timbres, resonances, dissonances and underwater beats in a sonic continuum that invites sonic exploration and real time sound shaping.

Inspired by instruments of similar architecture such as the 'Lyra 4' or 'Swarmatron', it offers a stripped down and raw version of basic applied electronics.

To learn more about these instruments, live performances and workshops provided by the collective, you can visit their website: dleplectronics.tumblr.com, and follow their networks on IG as [@delaputa.electronics](https://www.instagram.com/delaputa.electronics).



INTERVIEW: IAN BODDY

"...for me what is most exciting is that indefinable feeling you get of excitement and pure joy when a new piece suddenly emerges"

Ian Boddy is a composer, sound designer, DiN ambient music label owner & analogue synth aficionado. Specialising in ambient and electronic music, he has three main strands to his musical activities which are run under the umbrella of his own company, Something Else Music Limited.

What was it like when you started making music? What was your inspiration for your first compositions and what was your first equipment? What prompted you to found a label?

During the mid-1970s I really got into the music of the early German electronic pioneers such as Tangerine Dream, Klaus Schulze, Ashra etc. Their music and sounds fascinated me, they were unlike anything I had ever heard before. So when I was at University in Newcastle, studying of all things Biochemistry, I was told about a local arts centre which included a music studio that the public had access to. On entering that room for the first time I was confronted by an array of tape recorders and synths such as the VCS3 & AKS. From that point on I was hooked. Through a slow process of experimentation and tea-



ching myself I started doing concerts and releasing my music. This is a journey that still get on to this day. As I mentioned above I had access to some nice equipment at Spectro Arts Centre but the first instrument I purchased for myself was a really basic Jen string machine. I can't remember its model number but I used it on my early cassette albums such as Images and Elements of Chance. Although I self released albums in the 80s and 90s it wasn't until 1999 that I conceived the idea of a professional record label. This was of course

Is your way of composing based on improvisation, on respecting some structure or is there sometimes a mix of this? Are you inspired by any theme or concept, books, movies, etc? What composition techniques did you use on albums like "Coil" or "Axiom"?

This is a very open ended question and of course "it all depends". If I'm working on my commercial library music compositions then of course these are very structured and disciplined compositionally. My own material tends to start with

between the set you put together to record a studio album and the one you propose for a live performance? Do you pre-patch all your sounds before a show or do you usually improvise spontaneously?

Well yes in that I have much more time to get everything "perfect" in the studio whereas live you are often "flying by the seat of your pants". But then again that's part of the fun about playing live, it has an element of danger, things can go wrong, although usually they don't! It also depends on the type of con-



se my DiN label which has now been running for almost 25 years and has well over 100 releases. I wanted the label to reflect my musical tastes and to give me a chance to not only release music by other artists but to form collaborative partnerships with several other musicians. I wanted to blend the analogue musical heritage of my youth with the newer techniques emerging through digital & computer technology. And finally I wanted the label to have a distinct identity, not only in the music itself but in the way the artworks on the album covers was presented.

improvisation and experimentation but on the albums you mentioned, Axiom & Coil, I wanted the tracks to be quite concise, not long form tracks that this genre is often known for. Thus once the initial ideas were born the more structured approach that I apply to my library music work then takes over. I often get a picture in my head of how a piece should be and thus I can work toward that. I like music to take the listener on a sonic journey so I will work with textures, dynamic changes and melodies to create this effect. **Is there a big conceptual difference**

cert I am playing. Recently I have been playing a lot of smaller, modular events. In these i have my live rig patched up and ready to go with a basic form in mind but it's largely improvised. In October I will be playing again at the Gatherings in Philadelphia. this is a much more structure concert in that i will be playing live versions of tracks from albums such as Axiom & Coil. Here I will need to have backing tracks running in Ableton Live on my laptop. However I do sync up my modular rack so i can run live sequences over the top as well as play keyboard parts.

The live performance at Soundquest 2021 was great. Are you currently using that set or have you modified it?

That was a unique performance that I created for that wonderful event. It was live and semi-improvised but as it was in my studio I had access to instruments such as my large Serge modular system that I wouldn't normally take out live. I've used a couple of elements from it in other performances but I tend to make each concert performance different.

How did you live the evolution of your music over the years? What challenges did you set yourself? What thrills you the most about your own music?

Music for me is ever changing. Every artist is on their own unique journey. Obviously over the years you get better at the technical aspects of music creation both in terms of playing, composition and studio techniques. But for me what is most exciting is that indefinable feeling you get of excitement and pure joy when a new piece suddenly emerges. It's very difficult to pin down why music has this effect on you, and in a way I don't want to know. It just does. Even after creating, performing and releasing music for over 40 years this thrill still hasn't diminished. I'm into my mid-60s now and really I don't think I'll ever give up music totally. There's always new things to try, different pathways and experiments for you to journey through.

When will you release a new album? Can you tell us something in advance?

I've got a few concerts coming up this Autumn including a nice collaborative concert with Dave Bessell in November. This is a new collaboration so it will be fascinating to see how that unfolds. And there's also the Gatherings concert I mentioned above. Both these gigs will be recorded and should end up on album releases next year.



BERND-MICHAEL LAND: BEGEGNUNGEN (ICH SEHE DICH)

In these years when fewer and fewer CDs are manufactured. Where the vast majority of musical works are offered in downloadable format only. There are still artists for whom the artistic dimension remains at the heart of their concerns. Bernd-Michael Land is one of them! In exceptional sound quality for an album with such far-reaching dimensions in heteroclitic universes, the magician from Rodgau-Hainhausen in Germany delivers a solid album in this BEGEGNUNGEN (Ich sehe dich), translating Encounters (I see you). Like with Humano:Id - Visionen,

this new album features 13 tracks, which have little in common, for a distance of 74 minutes. The CD also comes with a 24-page booklet containing valuable information on the music, as well as the lyrics to Ma yen wa. In fact, this track, sung in Ewondo, demonstrates the breadth of genres that inhabit the dimensions of an album that combines Berlin School as much as Teutonic rock and experimental electronic music (EM). It's a bit like those chance encounters where conversations often have neither tail nor meaning! And like with Humano:Id - Visionen, our ears need time and a few listens - although some tracks

fit in very well - to familiarize ourselves with this universe in constant motion, even within its rather short time envelope, and which is prone to some good sonic turbulences.

The Golden Light begins with a short storm of electronic turbulences. A wave of melody emerges, with a keyboard that spreads a veil of melancholy. The movement is circular but meditative in nature. It's a delicate ballad grafted with sound effects of another electronic genetics, notably around the 3:30 minute mark when the keyboard loses its melody in the humming of a layer of mist and ethereal voices.



It sounds like a form of organic-cyborg dialect. The melody picks up again a few seconds later. If strange whirrs lurk around, it's more cadenced with an upward movement of a sequenced bass line. The keyboard drops fat, resonant chords in a slightly more dramatic finale. Ma yen wa features the voice of Cameroonian singer Amourel Marius Tsogo. It's more a recitation of a poem in the singer's mother tongue. The opening may have ruffled my eardrums, but the rest of the track flows quite well. But it's not my best track in BEGEGNUNGEN (Ich sehe dich)! Synchronism follows with a bouncy electronic rhythm that's fi-

lled with resonances, alternative sequences and gurgling sound effects. The pulsating bass line drives this rhythm, over which arpeggios caper with a distant harmonic texture. The synth makes roll the cooings of an electronic nightingale over this generous structure of the sequencer flows and the contrasting tones of its jumping chords. Rather difficult to tame, Metal Art-E-Fact is a more experimental, atmospheric track with an armada of tinkling sounds that twirl and resonate in an atypical spherical choreography that gets caught up in heavy industrial hum around the 90-second mark. It becomes a dark, almost cacophonous

track, with video-game, galactic and organic sound effects. Augen | Blick follows with a good game of sequencer, where jumping chords cavort in a rhythmic choreography more appealing to the neurons than the feet. Bernd-Michael Land has the art of combining different rhythmic textures that eventually converge into something appealing to the ears. Here, the rhythm hops as it traces harmonious zigzags that become hypnotic loops. The

musician creates mutations in the language of his rhythmic sequences while adding starbursts here and there, a few avian chirps and a deliciously sly bass wave that adds depth to this delicate movement of mathematized spasms. Deeply moving, Polarization is a beautiful ambient melody with falling chords that give off a melancholy timbre that secretly weeps in the bluish vapors that have escaped from the synth. Layers that sound like the drama of an organ do nothing to stem the nostalgic texture of the ambience. From their resonances emerge a beautiful linear sequencer movement whose acoustic guitar or harp tone sculpts

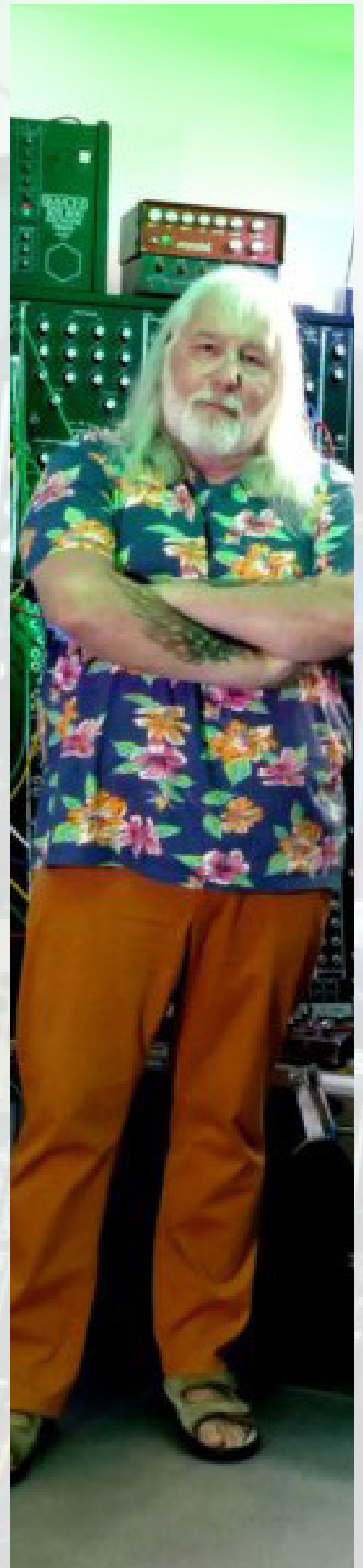
a reverie to melt our soul. A beautiful title in this constellation of strangeness that adorns this fascinating album, which requires more than one listen before finding its charms. And Polarization is the proof!

Another solid track that evolves rather well in its short time frame, Fragment emerges from its layer of orchestral fog and the various forms of clatter that pierce it to take root in a three-phase rhythmic formula. First, there's a wide-ranging bass stratum that rises and falls with the fascinating texture of a hungry ogre. The percussions are a fitting backdrop to this groove-oriented approach, and the sequencer unties a line that flows in fits and starts. These disparate elements create a confusion of rhythmic genres: Groove, rock or Berlin School? But it's a rather musical confusion that becomes symbiotic with the bits of harmonies that are equally dissonant in nature. Solid and inviting to dance to, Fragment can easily rival Robert Schroeder's Groove rhythms on the same level of creativity. In the same vein as Metal Art-E-Fact, Resonator is more experimental in nature, with its sampling of industrial noise and collage of sound textures more akin to the abstract dimensions of Pete Farn. We're not disoriented, since some of these structures were on Humano:Id- Visionen. The first part of Momentum is more experimental ambient in nature, with beautiful mellotron layers hovering lazily over a universe of mismatched sonic fluctuations. A seductive Berlin School structure emerges from the sequencer towards the last third of the track. The movement is fluid and driving, in stark contrast to the slow, meditative approach of the opening. Prism follows with a crisp, curt rhythm. A rhythm that sounds very Tangerine Dream in another sound envelope, still rich in color and effect. The mellotron slides nebulous orchestrations, as if slightly

seraphic, over the rhythm, which develops towards a good Teutonic rock à la Düsseldorf School. The finale features chords that rumble and radiate of an organic metal. A cross between Kraftwerk and Tangerine Dream in a rather sci-fi tonal envelope. Creative to the end, this Bernd-Michael Land! Babylon is another experimental, atmospheric track with a more cinematic feel. The tone is very mechanical-industrial, with eardrum-piercing synth blades and waves. Organic and cyborg-like vocal effects can be detected amid the din of metallic roars and whirrs. An excellent track that combines Berlin School with a more progressive EM, Klang | Strukturen begins with a very good Berlin School with crisscrossing sequencer movements that carve out a circular rhythm with a slight zigzagging axis. Steam-train noises can be heard on this structure, where various organic clicks are grafted on. The rhythm takes a more dynamic tangent early in the track. It's at this point that the synth emerges to give us some great solos over tasty rhythmic modulations. The ambiances remind me of some very good Synergy in its 76-79 period. We stay with the formula of driving rhythms with Fractals and its circular sequencer framework that glues sequenced organic chirps to it. The track may be short, but it still favors these rhythmic mutations of the sequencer and the proliferation of sound effects on this rhythm where the muffled pounding of the percussions add a more chthonian dimension.

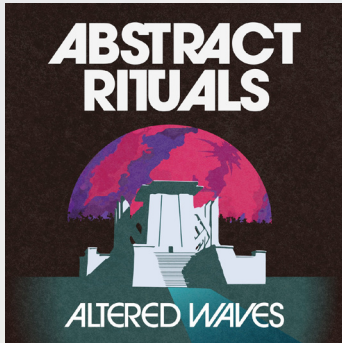
I know that this chronicle is already very long. So let me conclude by saying that BEGEGNUNGEN (Ich sehe dich) is a simply breathtaking album by Bernd-Michael Land!

Sylvain Lupari
synthsequences.com

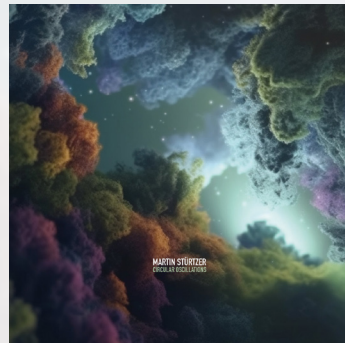


TOP 12 RELEASES:

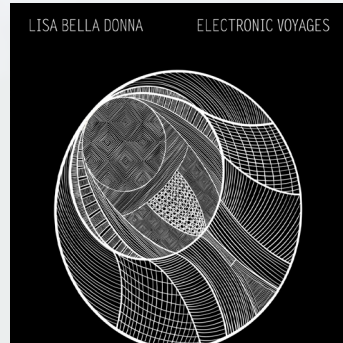
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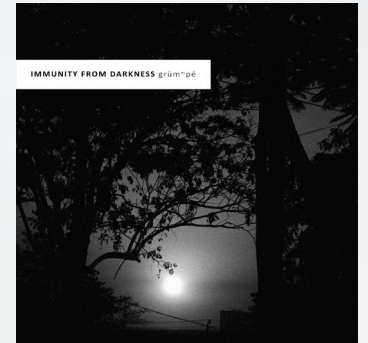
ALTERED WAVES BY
ABSTRACT RITUALS



CIRCULAR OSCILLATIONS
BY MARTIN STÜRTZER



ELECTRONIC VOYAGES
BY LISA BELLA DONNA



IMMUNITY FROM DARKNESS BY grüm~pé



IMPROVISATION ON
FOUR SEQUENCES BY
SUZANNE CIANI



KLARIANST BY MAC OF
BIONIGHT



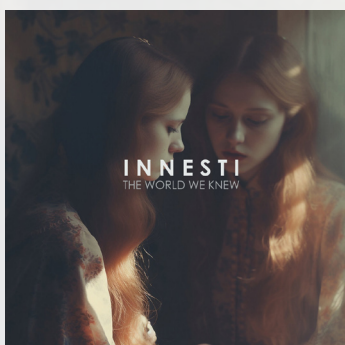
MULTIZONAL
MINDSCRAMBLE BY
POLYPORES



ROADS OF REFLECTIONS
AND THOUGHTS BY RENÉ
VAN DER WOUDE



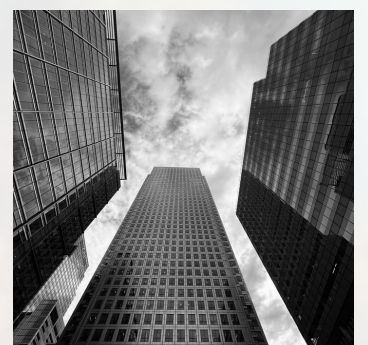
THE MORPHIC CYCLE BY
MICHAEL BRÜCKNER



THE WORLD WE KNEW
BY INNESTI



TRANSFORMATION OF
MATTER BY THE
POLYMUSSON



TRIO BY COUSIN SILAS

SHOW US YOUR STUDIO: NIELS

Artist: Niels (Music and perform under multiple names: Triple H, Niles Triple, Niels)

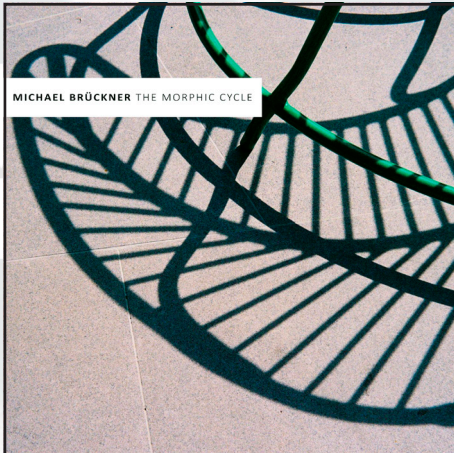
City: Delft, The Netherlands

Music Genre: Hardcore / Gabber, Techno.

Gear list: Roland MC-909, Roland System-1, Behringer TD-3, Akai MPC 500, Yamaha RM1X, Line6 POD xt (Distortion, delay and reverb for the TD-3), Behringer Mini-FEX (Chorus for the System-1), M-Audio Keystation 88ES (Connected to the hardware), Novation SL 25 MKII (Connected to DAW), LEM RD 82 FX (Mixer), FL Studio (All Plugins Edition), KRK Rokit 6
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/@nielstriple>



CYCLICAL DREAMS: LATEST ALBUMS



THE MORPHIC CYCLE BY MICHAEL BRÜCKNER

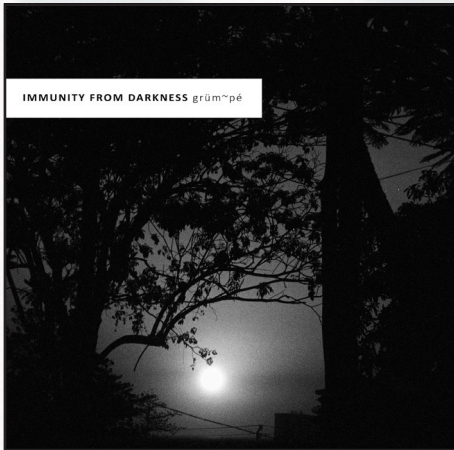
MUSIC COMPOSED, PERFORMED AND PRODUCED BY MICHAEL BRÜCKNER

MASTERED: MICHAEL BRÜCKNER

BANDCAMP ALBUM: <https://cyclicaldreams.bandcamp.com/album/the-morphic-cycle-cyd-0090>

ARTWORK: CYCLICAL DREAMS

PHOTOGRAPHY: AMP PUTTIPONG



IMMUNITY FROM DARKNESS BY GRÜM~PÉ

MUSIC COMPOSED, PERFORMED AND PRODUCED BY MAURICE GALLAGHER

MASTERED: MAURICE GALLAGHER (AKA GRÜM~PÉ)

BANDCAMP ALBUM: <https://cyclicaldreams.bandcamp.com/album/immunity-from-darkness-cyd-0091>

ARTWORK: CYCLICAL DREAMS

PHOTOGRAPHY: AMP PUTTIPONG



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