

IGLOO MAG / USA / March 2004

As part two of a collaborative curatorial effort by Philippe Petit (BiP-HOp) and Christopher Murphy (Fällt) this new release by Stephan Mathieu (Fällt, Orthlorng, Bottrop-Boy) as Full Swing and Douglas Benford (BiP-HOp, Sprawl, Suburbs of Hell) as Si-cut.db sets standards high for collaborative work in the contemporary electronic milieu. Seven of the thirteen tracks here were written collaboratively as fine tuned reconstructions of each other's original work. On tracks like "Flurry.Gardening" the approach is slow and stirring, a bit anxious. The base drone crosses between a church organ and a still aircraft prior to takeoff. The effort presents an inquisitive approach to how experimental composers can examine and/or mirror their own micro techniques. By using random deduction they have fused a formula that acts as a spin-off to their solo work. As two young composers, both currently at a pinnacle of creativity, this often might be more a "vs." than a natural pairing. Don't miss Fehler's optical cover art graphics, to be read interactively from multiple angles. Though hungry ears may want to chew slowly on this, savor the minute eccentricities that lay deeply in the dubby statics and bright microbeats on "Cond.Verge." [Reciproprocess: +/vs.] Vol. 2 lays down some heady rhythms that initially defy categorization but have lots in common with the process of listening and influence. One might hear references to turntablism ("Adorable.Capitolism"), dub, film soundtracks ("Divpops.Stage") and even plain old pop music. One thing is constant, casual atmosphere, almost a soundtrack to a sparse, empty room, wired for sound, with open electricity and a window cracked ever so slightly, circulating wind and filtering various inclement weather; An ambitious alliance that will hopefully spawn into future projects.

<http://igloomag.com/doc.php?task=view&id=637&category=reviews>

STYLUS / Canada / January 2004

This Mathieu/Benford collaboration is the second installment in the Reciproprocess + / vs. series, released on Philippe Petit's Bip-Hop label in association with Christopher Murphy's Fällt. The series concept transcends one artist merely remixing another; instead, a release includes collaborative pieces, individual tracks, and remixes of each other's works. The idea originated out of Petit's desire to document the process of reciprocity between artists, with even Fehler's outstanding design reinforcing the idea as the packaging flips inside-out to display the presentation of one participant mirrored by the other.

In this instance, Benford contributes four individual pieces and Mathieu two, with the rest collaborations of one sort or another. Both artists are well-established, of course, Benford for his numerous Si-cut.db releases on Sprawl and Suburbs of Hell and his partnership with Benjamin Edwards (Benge) in Tennis, and Mathieu renowned for solo works on labels like 12k, Mille Plateaux, Ritornell, and for Heroin, his acclaimed collaboration with Ekkehard Ehlers.

Mathieu's a digital pointillist with a propensity for microscopic detailing whose meticulous dissections translate into sonorous, reverberant sound sculptures. Like others in the microsound genre, he deliberately foregrounds the detritus of digital mistakes—clicks, pops, static, hiss—in order to weave sensuous soundscapes from them. Benford shares Mathieu's love of texture but approaches it in a dubbier manner, his style characterized by spaciousness, echo, and billowing atmospheres. Their collaborative opener 'Und.And,' a shimmering aural construction with creaking waves swathed in crackling hiss and static, is Master Class in sonic textures. Another collaborative track, 'Don't.Ask' teems with dense droning flurries of electronics that recall the style of kindred spirit Fennesz. As his solo tracks indicate, Benford's music flirts with conventionality in its incorporation of rhythm elements, and, in the joint piece 'Novecento.Avocado,' his dubby bass lines, hi-hats, and bass combine to suggest a minimal house beat alongside Mathieu's cloud of crackle and static. Mathieu's tracks are resolutely uncommercial by comparison, as the tracks float amorphaously without anchor. The gentle meandering drone 'Octavia.Drive' and 'Adorable.Capitolism' with its brightly thrumming, hiccupping fragments are quintessential Mathieu.

The general mood of Reciproprocess +/vs. vol. 2 is atmospheric with an emphasis on digital processing, soundscapes that glisten, swirl, and whirr, and dubby loops. Yet in spite of its intricate and clinical detailing, the results are warm and inviting with traces of melancholy occasionally surfacing. Even though the two have different leanings—Benford techno-dub and Mathieu sculpted minimalism—their simpatico sensibilities produce a relatively homogeneous result where it's sometimes difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. Ideally, a collaboration should result in some unique synergistic amalgam that neither collaborator would produce alone and that's—subtly, admittedly—the case here.

Reviewed by: Ron Schepper

<http://www.stylusmagazine.com/review.php?ID=1634>

THE MILK FACTORY / UK / December 2003

West-London based Douglas Benford, better known as Si-Cut.db, is an extremely busy man. Not only has he, since the late eighties, released an impressive number of records under a variety of aliases, but he is also the founder of Sprawl, a monthly club event that aims at providing decent exposure to unknown artists from all over the world, and Sprawl Imprint, his record label.

From his early releases as Mediaform and Radial Blend, to his most recent work as Si-Cut.db, Benford has explored a variety of musical forms, from house-infused electronica to dub. He has also collaborated with a wide range of artists, including Robin Rimbaud, better known as Scanner, Doug Martin, Sarah Cracknell, of St Etienne fame, and, most prominently, with Ben D. Edwards, aka Bengé, for their Tennis project. Founder of the Suburbs Of Hell label in 1987, on which he released his early records, Benford has since spawned Sprawl Imprint and released albums from the likes of Freeform and Puppy, and was also responsible for Hmm, a collection of hymns revisited by an impressive number of electronic musicians. With influences ranging from Brian Eno to Talking Heads and Wire to Krautrock, it is no surprise that his music has gone through a number of evolutions, often demonstrated through various incarnations.

Si-cut.db has just released a new solo full-length : find some shade, on High Point Lowlife...

Only a few weeks prior to the release of this new Si-Cut.db record, Bip-Hop released the second in their Reciproprocess series, presenting the collaborative work of Benford with Full Swing mastermind Stephan Mathieu. The series was originally initiated by Bip-Hop label boss Philippe Petit to document the working process of two artists collaborating with each other, and the musical reciprocity between them. The idea was taken further as not only each album sees two artists, often coming from different musical backgrounds, working together, but the series is also a collaboration between Bip-Hop and Northern Ireland's Fällt.

Of the thirteen tracks featured on Reciproprocess 2, seven were written by both musicians while Benford took care of four more and Mathieu contributed two extra tracks. If Benford's solo efforts remain generally close to his usual realm, the rest of the album is closer to Mathieu's minimalist approach. Intricate and more introvert than Find Some Shade, Reciproprocess 2 provides however some interesting moments. If Und.And and Don't.Ask, which open this album, are intriguing in the way they seem static, yet develop imperceptibly, tracks such as Jfm.Gen, Cond.Verge and Novecento.Avocado give an interesting insight into the different musical world in which these two musicians evolve. If Benford injects some elements of dub in these compositions, they evolve to involve Mathieu's intense digital processing. Often though, the pair voluntarily reject the notion of melody to focus on atmospheres and create challenging sonic constructions which vary for deep sensorial moments (Wissen.Sch.Nitt, Divpops.Stage) to more opened and accessible compositions (Cond.Verge, Novecento Avocado). As far apart these two albums might be, Douglas Benford provides a common sonic thread, if exploited in two very different ways. His collaboration with Stephan Mathieu demonstrates once again how easily he can adapt his musical persona to a new context.

http://www.themilkfactory.co.uk/reviews/sicutdb_findsomeshade.htm

BBC / UK / November 2003

"BiP-Hop in association with Fällt are pleased to present Reciproprocess + /vs. A series of two split CDs featuring the work/s of two sound assemblers and documenting the process of musical reciprocity between them. This second instalment features two composers contributing a series of collaborative, independent and remixed works."

But don't let that put you off. It's difficult to decipher who the artists' names/monikers are, what the title of the cd is and difficult to get a sense of collaboration from the music. The track titles bear the gnomic air of adumbration, as if forced to meet the requirements of a particularly severe operating system. All of this is of course par for the course for much contemporary electronica, as initiated by Warp and Autechre.

Bip-hop and Fällt are two major conductors on a global circuit (board), a vast distributed network of processors whose inputs and outputs are obscured, but whose calculations are audible through countless releases. Desplesamentos (Brazil), Dissonanze (Italy), Mutek (Canada): the very portability and relative cheapness of the laptop deployed as musical instrument supports the global propagation via the festival round. At any moment it seems as though these quiet, frequently anonymous operatives might infect all other musics virus-like and render them inoperable.

Electronica is perhaps the new jazz, its breadth and subtle distinctions as intimidating and puzzling as the catalogues of Blue Note, Impulse! and their like were to the budding crew-necked initiate. If such a novice were blindfolded and pointed at a room full of electronica artists, bumping into si-cut.db and Full Swing would be as fine an introduction as any.

At first listening the soundscape of this release may appear forbidding and cerebral - which impression may be attributed to the beatlessness of the first 24 minutes, but close attention leads to fascination. There's the hiss of

white noise, synthetic sounds like tapping tupperware lids, passages which feel like slipping down digital screens, polygonal shale ricocheting away from angular feet, the sound of ballbearings falling from overturned bagatelles, the satisfying whumpf of reversed bass impacts, the ringing of massed tibetan bells caught in fractal timeloops, lathes rasping on metal, electric sanders burring rough edges away.

In the context of the severe graphic design and obscure titling which accompanies this release, it seems as though such allusions might be unwelcome. Sentiments such as love and hate and other grist to the mill of traditional musicmaking generally appear only as the echos of exorcised ghosts in electronica, the funk of bodies an almost forgotten memory. However, the music on this release betrays a distinct beauty.

Douglas Benford writes in the liner notes of "seeking to devolve and simplify [his own sound], whilst leaving an emotional content." In this he and Stephan Mathieu succeed admirably, the only hesitation being the trappings of the genre within which the collaboration takes place, which seem to belie or hinder this impulse, although a gentle humour does seem apparent in some of the titles - flurry.gardening anyone?

Reviewer: Colin Buttimer

http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/experimental/reviews/sicutdb_fullswing.shtml

CRACKED / Austria / October 2003

Only lately have I stumbled upon the term "microsound" and now here is an album that could fall into this description better than most. Condensed yet loose sounds, noises and disturbances accompanied by warm yet distanced electronic music, subtle pulsing beats and minimal changes. You have heard about the two artists collaborating on this release under their monikers of Full Swing and Si-Cut.db. You have heard about BipHop and its progressive, electronic releases. "reciproprocess" presents a new highpoint in the focus of BipHop on collaborations, as they say, trying to fight against the "autistic side of contemporary electronica". After all, this is an unbelievably warm and intriguing release, even if it sounds cold and distanced most of the time. But hey, that's urban lifestyle, for ya. Could it be, that electronic music is the most interesting at those places, where an individual artist starts to build new spaces that are his or hers alone and have never been built before? The moment in art or the development of music, when a musician finds his very own language or, as in the case of electronic music more prominent, set of structural bricks from which to build a formidable building. If that is so, and I will hold on to that theory for a moment because it seems to be quite true to my own observations from my listening experiences (at which time we should leave the question of how much the listener does to the music open and unanswered, but not surrendered. We will come to that at some other point in time.), then how do we have to judge collaborative efforts. Let's say that collaborations are successful and artistically interesting whenever they manage to produce a vocabulary or even syntax of sounds which none of the producers alone could have come to. In short words, I crave for innovation, even if only the progression is only to be found in the artist. Why the importance on the person of the producer / musician / artist? Theoretically, in electronica the producer wasn't meant to be more than a mere label, a signifier to point the listener to a certain style. But you can't overcome the power of the interest of human people in human people. Moreover, the deeper you dig into truly underground or alternative music, the less people you are going to find on all sides, consumers and producers, therefore the whole focus gets pinned on a smaller and smaller number of people until you are able to single out individuals as individuals. Maybe analogous to the masses at techno-raves down to the half a dozen fans at an off-beat electronica-concert.

BipHop has always been a place to find outside insights and new innovative electronica that is absolutely besides the masses of music being produced in this genre. And, BipHop has always had a big interest in the act of collaborations. From the many projects including two producers / musicians, such as the main act BipHop-Tennis (also with Si-Cut.db) or Angel to the various remix-albums or bonus-albums, the act of collaborating artists has always held a high point in the universe of BipHop. On the one hand, the reciprocity of the process, the exchange of ideas and the way of structuring the production of music in a collaborative effort, is something interesting to behold and explore. On the other hands, the synergetic product, a result that is more than the sum of its pieces, is the desired end of such a project. To explore this field deeper and further, BipHop offers the second part of a series called "reciproprocess" and the added "+/vs." is an almost iconographic synopsis of the theoretical framework I have tried to elaborate on above. The series offers individual works, collaborations and remixes of the two artists by the two artists. (Let's think for moment, about the question if a remix is a subordinated form of the collaboration – less communication, less reciprocally – or rather an undisputed form of its own – more autonomy, more dynamic effects – and also leave it to other times to answer the question.) The moment of questioned integrity that is connected with giving your music away to a remixer, and the almost painful delivery of your own work into some other persons hands, is also mirrored in the fact that the artists

present their real names next to their monikers as artists, as if it were an electronica-tag-team. (The akas against the real persons. Another interesting point to behold.)

Since both musicians on this CD, Stephan Mathieu and Douglas Benford, are apt to produce intriguing rhythmical grooves and structures from noise and minimal soundchanges within actually rather monotonous sounds, this is of course what the listener has to expect. Flirring, whirring static noises are almost on each of the tracks, accompanied by warm keyboards and liquid atmospheres. Microsounds, in which every single and minute tone has found it's place, which nevertheless sound warm and human. Or, even more true, electronic sounds with a gargantuan dynamic that help hyperspeeded cyberfreaks to come down and drift in an ocean of sound. What a beautiful thought.

<http://www.monochrom.at/cracked/reviews/Rev%20mathieu+benford.htm>

FUNPROX / Holland / October 2003

style: microscopic technoid music

This collaboration CD released by Bip-hop brings us the work by Douglas Benford (aka Si-cut.db) and Stephan Mathieu (aka Full Swing). Both artists have been releasing a multitude of works on various labels (12k, Background, Sprawl, Ritornell, etc.). Both artists also focus on making microtonal, highly microscopic technoid music. This makes it quite hard to tell which part of the sound of this CD belongs to which artist, which is the ideal form of collaboration since the music is a whole.

The tracks on this CD are made of soft, crispy soundlayers and loops (probably coming from a laptop) that form dense soundscapes with a touch of dub. Reciproprocess +/-vs is full of a melancholic, warm atmosphere and sometimes reminds me of works by Pole, Rhythm and Sound (and other Basic Channel related stuff), and the laptop compositions of Fennesz, Oval or Pimmon.

A steady, well-done collaboration CD that should appeal to listeners of the bands mentioned above.

<http://www.funprox.com/judgment/review.asp?show=690>

VITAL WEEKLY # 391 - Week 40 / Holland / October 2003

The second volume in the not easy to follow collaborations by Bip Hop (following Komet and Bovine Life, see Vital Weekly 332). Full Swing (aka Stephan Mathieu) and Si.cut.Db (aka Douglas Benford). Both blokes have a couple of solo tracks (two and four respectively) and work together on no less than seven tracks. Since the outside doesn't indicate this very clearly, I started playing the CD without glancing at the booklet (which provide nice text and discography on both artists), and what happened was that I was thinking at one point: wow this is a really nice and homogenous CD. It seems like all tracks fit together. A track like 'Chlorine.gen' is a solo piece by Douglas, but could have easily be a piece by the two, for instance. It has Douglas' beats but Stephan's grainy sound. Right after that we have 'Adorable.capitolism', a solo piece by Stephan, but which is quite rhythmical. And so on and so on. Unlike the first Reciproprocess volume, which wasn't a very easy marriage, this is one that is really well done. Both artists have similar interests in producing partly rhythmical (even dubby) music, but also care about the ambient sides of things and the warmth of sound. Of course for both the laptop plays a central role. Collaborations in general may not always work, but if you search one that really does, then I'd say this is the place to be. (FdW)

DE:BUG / Germany / November 2003

Eine Split-CD gegenseitiger Remixe der beiden (Full Swing und Sci-Cut.DB), die sehr ruhig knisternd elegisch wie ein Kaminfeuer brennt, digital, selbstredend, aber auch irgendwie heimisch, warm und je mehr hier Mathieu zum Vorschein kommt natürlich auch um so euphorischer auf diesen Blinden Fleck von Sound konzentriert, der einfach nur so schimmert und einen damit so in den Bann zieht, dass es kein zurück mehr gibt. Ach, ich liebe solche Sounds, da braucht man nichts weiter mehr, und braucht vor allem nicht über etwas nachzudenken, dass Musik hiesse. Beste Bip-Hop-Platte ever, würde ich sagen.

Bleed

L'ENTREPOT / Belgium / March 2004

De tweede schijf in de "[reciproprocess : +/-vs]" serie, telkens een samenwerking tussen twee artiesten en twee labels (Bip-Hop en Fält) lijdt niet aan dit euvel. En na een aantal luisterbeurten groeit de plaat alleen maar. Voor het muzikaal vuurwerk zijn verantwoordelijk, Stephan Mathieu en Douglas Benford (Si-Cut.db, Tennis en het Sprawl label) alhoewel vuurwerk? Twee heren uit de minimale sector en in het geval van Benford niet vies zijn van een vleugje elektronische dub. Deze heren weten de nodige spanning te houden in hun ruisplaat en als Douglas Benford zijn onderkoelde dub hierin verwerkt is het niet te versmaden.

KATHODIK / Italy / December 2003

Philippe Petit e Christopher Murphy, autentiche menti pensanti rispettivamente di due label quali Bip-Hop e Fallt, mantengono le promesse assemblando il secondo prezioso package della serie Reciproprocess + /vs., appuntamento che si avvia a diventare un imprescindibile punto di riferimento per la nuova musica digitale di limite. Resta alto il livello di suono quindi - e se il primo volume della serie ci aveva intrigato con i clicks di Frank Bretschneider e di Chris Dooks, questo ci sorprende con un sovrapporsi di rarefazioni ad altissimo tasso emozionale. A 'fronteggiarsi' stavolta sono due talenti emergenti, già conosciuti per aver solcato i territori dell'incomunicabilità digitale con i loro album e non solo: Stephan Mathieu e Douglas Benford, rispettivamente Full Swing e si-cut.db. Due artisti dalle connotazioni differenti che effettuano un rendez vous tra le atmosfere di un suono straniante, etereo e quanto mai coinvolgente. In primo piano la cifra stilistica di Mathieu, più dilatata e astratta, anche se molte fluttuazioni dub, proprie dello stile si-cut.db, emergono dalla nebbia elettrica del suono generale. 13 episodi in totale per una serie di stratificazioni ambient ricche di suggestioni ai limiti della ricerca sonora. Un escalation di colori, di odori e di emozioni in progressione cinematografica. Per il futuro si passa ancora da qui.

Recensore: Vittorio Marozzi

<http://www.kathodik.it/modules.php?name=Reviews&rop=showcontent&id=1005>

GEIGER / Denmark / December 2003

Lige siden de helt tidlige udgivelser har det lille franske selskab Bip-HOP haft det erklærede mål, at det skulle blande forskellige genrer og værker sammen for på den vis at eksperimentere sig frem til en række nye, ofte overraskende musikalske formler. På denne baggrund har selskabet kunnet præsentere en række varierede elektronisk dub- og glitch-udgivelser, som bl.a. er opstået ved, at mærket har sat forskellige kunstnere sammen, der enten har indspillet deciderede samarbejder eller remixet hinanden. Dette album er således det andet på selskabet, der er opstået som et gensidigt remix-projekt. Det første var en kreativ duel mellem Komet og Bovine Life.

Denne gang har selskabet fået en af sine mere etablerede kunstnere – Douglas Benford, der normalt står for en minimal elektronisk dub – til at gå i clinch med lydskulptøren Stephan Mathieu. En artist, der normalt mest er kendt for sine ekstremt stillestående, krystalklare soundscapes, som stilmæssigt kan minde en smule om Pimmon og Cray. Albummets disposition lyder således: Benford leverer tre solo-numre, Mathieu kommer med to – og tilsammen står de så begge for de resterende syv bidrag.

De to kunstneres musikalske verdener har det til fælles, at de bygges op omkring minimalistiske strukturer, der gerne krydres med varme klangstrømme eller dubbede, beat-agtige strukturer. Albummet indeholder dog ikke næsten ingen beats i traditionel forstand – musikken vugger sig nærmere fremad i kraft af bølge-lignende pulseringer. På de numre, hvor de to decideret arbejder sammen, fornemmer man da også tydeligt, at parret har valgt at kollaborere fordi det burde være muligt at definere et fælles udtryk. Som albummet skrider frem fornemmer man virkelig, at duoens to medlemmer gør sig umage for at mødes midtvejs. Dette lykkes dog sjældent, da hvert enkelt nummer tydeligt afslører, om det har været Mathieu eller Benford, som er kommet med de oprindelige grundspor – kompositionerne bliver ganske enkelt mere eller mindre stillestående/dubbede alt efter hvem, der har taget føringen. Denne mislykkede symbiose resulterer i et temmelig varieret – til tider skizofrent – udtryk. Samtidig er den dog også med til at gøre albummet mere levende, da de to formår at kaste nyt lys over hinandens udtryk gennem konstante skift og variationer. Specielt de fælles numre fører det præg af uforudsigelighed, der trods også kendetegner solo-bidragene, ud i en ganske høj potens.

Rent konceptuelt lider (Reciproprocess : +/vs.) vol. 2 altså et skibbrud i kraft af, at det ikke for alvor lykkes at smelte de to kunstneres i forvejen ret unikke musikalske udtryksformer sammen til noget helt tredje. Omvendt har Mathieu og Benford held med at producere et album, der er noget mere varieret og lytterenligt end det, man ellers er vant til at høre fra begge kanter – ikke mindst fordi numrene på albummet i det hele taget er ret forskelligartede. Musikalsk set er pladens overrumplende vekselvirkninger mellem minimale dub-effekter og lavmælte klangflader bestemt ingen fiasko. Trods sine konceptuelle svagheder må (Reciproprocess : +/vs.) vol. 2 altså betegnes som et interessant eksperiment, der lykkes på trods af sig selv.

<http://www.geiger.dk/anmeldelser/anmeldelse.php?id=878>

GAZ-ETA' / Poland / December 2003

Oto druga cz ę z cyklu zainicjowanego przez Phillippa Petit i Christophera Murphy z wytwórni Bip_Hop i Fallt, w ramach którego twórcy eksperymentalnej elektroniki nawzajem remiksują swoje utwory. Tym razem

do pojedynku stają Douglas Benford alias Si-Cut.db i Stephan Mathieu alias Full Swing. Obaj są dobrze znani miłośnikom awangardowych poszukiwań dźwiękowych - pierwszy od lat penetruje niezmiernie obszary cyfrowego dubu, a drugi sypnie z laptopowych wariacji o minimalistycznym charakterze.

Największe wrażenie robią utwory stworzone przez artystów wspólnie: spotyka się w nich upodobanie Benforda do powtarzania poszczególnych fraz kompozycji, typowa dla jego muzyki fragmentaryczność i przestrzenność ze skłonnością Mathieu do redukcji zbędnych elementów nagrania i upodobaniem do stosowania wszelkiego rodzaju szumów. Ciekawe są również autorskie propozycje awangardzistów: pierwszy z nich prezentuje nam dźwiękowe zlepy, w których nadrzędną rolę pełnią zdeformowane akordy syntezatorowe wywiedzione z dubowej stylistyki, a drugi - statyczne kompozycje, których esencją stanowi komputerowo modulowany noise o relaksacyjnym charakterze. Do przesyłki dołączona jest książeczka z dyskografiami obu artystów, ich opiniami o tworzonym dziele oraz zgrabnie napisanymi sylwetkami twórców. A wszystko to w minimalistycznej i pomysłowej okładce autorstwa Fehlera - nadwornego grafika Fallt. Paweł Gzyl

<http://www.vivo.pl/gaz-eta/gazeta15.htm>

KINDAMUZYK / The Netherlands / December 2003

si-cut.db en Full Swing. Niet de minsten in de avantgarde electronica, en op dit erg prettige samenwerkingsproject getiteld Reciproprocess bewijzen ze dat ze ook nog eens goed kunnen, ehh, samenwerken. Door elkaar, met elkaar, in elkaar, het lukt het tweetal op deze cd allemaal. Wat lukt ze dan allemaal?

Nou, het maken van knisperende ambient, van warme drones, van futuristische vergezichten. Heel mooi spul dus, je hoort hier en daar een dub-echo langskomen-komen-komen, de sound is nergens opdringerig, en met wat goede wil kun je het modernistische ambient noemen. Wie wat doet wordt nergens duidelijk; het individu is hier duidelijk ondergeschikt gemaakt aan het Grote Geheel. Maar goed, dat geheel is zo groot nog niet, dus het gebrek aan individualisme wordt nergens storend. Schokkend is het allemaal niet, en eenvormigheid wordt ook niet overal met succes bestreden, maar Reciproprocess +/- volume two is een prettige aangelegenheid geworden waar vooral niet te moeilijk over moet worden gedaan.

tekst: Bas Ickenroth

<http://www.kindamuzik.net/reviews/article.shtml?id=4694>

URBANMAG / The Netherlands / November 2003

Aan het andere eind van het spectrum vinden we de alomtegenwoordige Douglas Benford en Stephan Mathieu, eveneens hyperactieve vertegenwoordigers van de experimentele elektronica. Reciproprocess +/- is een gloednieuwe reeks van samenwerkingsverbanden tussen verschillende artiesten, opgestart door het Franse experimentele label Bip_Hop in samenwerking met het Noord-Ierse Fällt. De eerste cd in de reeks bracht Komet samen met Bovine Life. Het tweede deel bundelt de krachten van Mathieu aka Full Swing met die van Benford alias Si-Cut.Db. Benford en Mathieu werken samen op zeven nummers. Mathieu neemt twee solotracks voor zijn rekening. Benford niet minder dan vier. Het resultaat is een boeiende confrontatie tussen deze twee coryfeën van het elektronische experiment. Beide muzikanten hebben immers een totaal andere invalshoek. Mathieu staat eerder bekend om zijn minimale, compositorische musique concrète benadering. Als Si-Cut.Db maakt Benford al jaren experimentele techno met subtiele dubinvloeden. Het album start langzaam en statig met de korrelige sound van Mathieu aan zet. Het lijkt of de invloed van Benford doorheen de cd gaandeweg groeit. Vanaf 'Jfm.Gen' worden ook baslijnen, beats en ritmische invloeden geïntroduceerd. Glasheldere productie en schitterende opbouw ook op 'Cond.verge', dat knisperend van start gaat maar dan uitgroeit tot een wel heel erg originele dubby technotrack. 'Chlorine.Gen' daarentegen lijkt wel de soundtrack voor een brobbelend, chemisch bad. Zo'n samenwerking is altijd een dubbeltje op zijn kant maar de spanning wordt hoog gehouden op het dreigende en bijna orkestrale 'Divpops.Stage'. Lichtvoetiger gaat het eraan toe op het dansbare 'Medium.Lane.Gen' en op het conventionele 'Nearsighted.Gen', twee solotracks van Benford. Op 'Novecento.Avocado' proberen de heren het tot algemene tevredenheid nog éénmaal samen met een wel heel aantrekkelijk resultaat: een onweerstaanbare dubbaslijn op een bed van knetterende, microscopische elektronica.

http://www.urbanmag.be/dyn/servlet/frameset?type=artikel_muziek&action=show&artikel=815

GROOVES / Sweden / December 2003

Stephan Mathieu och Douglas Benford har tillsammans över tjugo skivor på sina samveten, men det här är första gången som de samsas om utrymmet. Reciproprocess +/-02 är del två i franska Bip-Hops serie där electronicakompositörer får tillfälle att mötas för att samarbeta. Plustecknet i titeln står för samarbetet.

Snedstreckt symboliserar att alla låtarna på skivan inte är skapade av de två artisterna i samarbete, utan var och en för sig. Slutligen talar förkortningen vs om att Mathieu och Benford även remixar varandras material. Låter det komplicerat? Nja, så värst komplicerat är det nog inte, snarare intressant. Som idé alltså. Musikaliskt händer inte så värst mycket nytt: clicks & cuts (eller clicks and pops som det kallas i texthäftet) som inte känns så värst aktuell är det man får. Fast sista låten Novecento. Avocado är lite mer lekfull och bjuder in ett dansant techhouse groove. Då funkar allt mycket bättre!

Mats Almegård

<http://www.groove.se/pdf/groove03-8r.pdf>

GROOVES MAGAZINE / Germany / December 2003

Hat es in jüngerer Vergangenheit nicht genug dubbige Varianten von dubbigen Versionen von dubbiger Electronica gegeben? Das Angenehme des dezent Geräuschigen wurde inzwischen doch wirklich gehörig durchbuchstabiert. Nur: Wie reagiert man auf eine Musik voller Freundlichkeiten, die nichts Anbieterndes hat, weil sie sich um all diese kleinen Grobheiten und Ungereimtheiten sorgt, sie in digitalen Soundbearbeitungen zwischen Kontingenz und Editierungsentscheidung ausstellt und permutiert? Nun ja: je genauer man hinhört, desto mehr muss man eine solche Musik mögen. In den zwei Solo-Stücken von Mathieu umschwirren sich losgelöste Partikelchen, die als Cluster nie zum Muster gerinnen, sondern bewegliche Variationen vorheriger Anordnungen durchlaufen. Benfords Tracks zelebrieren die mikroskopische Reichhaltigkeit und Formenvielfalt von Minimal-Dub-Arrangements. Und die gemeinsam erstellten Stücke (der größte Teil des Albums) verdeutlichen nur, dass keine klare Trennung beider Ansätze möglich ist. Schwärme von Minisounds werden von Mathieu und/oder Benford mit schlafwandlerisch anmutenden Akzentuierungen dazu bewogen, das Zeitfenster des jeweiligen Tracks milde irisieren zu lassen. FG

MUSIC-SCAN / Germany / November 2003

Bip Hop war schon immer ein Label, das sich aktiv gegen die elitären und von der künstlerischen Auffassung autistisch anmutende Electronicaschiene gewehrt. Auf diesem Album führen sie auch wieder zwei Künstler zusammen und verewigen das Ergebnis dieser Kooperation in Form eines Release. Stephan Mathieu und Douglas Benford arbeiteten dieses Mal zusammen und haben ein sehr minimalistisches und zurückgezogenes Stück Electronica geschaffen, das sich fast schüchtern und unbemerkt in die Hirnwindungen frisst. Auf den ersten Blick mögen die Tracks sehr unspektakulär und gewöhnlich klingen, doch wenn man sich mal etwas genauer mit dem Album auseinandersetzt, bemerkt man schnell, wie viele verschiedene Details hier in Form von feinsten Strukturen und Harmonien hier eingebunden wurden. Ich hätte es begrüßt, wenn man bisweilen vielleicht etwas beatlastiger zu Werke gegangen wäre, um der Platte etwas von ihrer inhärenten Schwere zu nehmen, doch auch so funktioniert das Ganze erstaunlicherweise über weite Strecken. Geduld sollte man hier allerdings schon mitbringen, wie eigentlich bei jeder guten Musik mit einer Halbwertszeit über 2 Stunden.

Matthias

http://www.music-scan.de/Templates/reviews_team.php?id=2274

WHIRLYPOP / Germany / November 2003

Da habe ich mir doch fast schon ein wenig Sorgen gemacht, so lange nichts Neues vom extraordinären französischen Label Bip-Hop gehört zu haben, in den letzten Jahren meine verlässlichste Quelle für unpräzise elektronische Sound-Experimente, die es bei aller Vielfalt doch zu einem sehr spezifischen Label-Sound gebracht haben. Das vorliegende Album ist die zweite Ausgabe einer letztes Jahr ins Leben gerufenen Kollaborationsreihe namens "[RECIPROCESS: +/vs.]3, die zwei elektronische Klangkünstler mit unterschiedlicher Label-Herkunft für ein Album aus ihren mutmaßlich isolierten Schlafzimmerstudios herausholen will, um gemeinsam Neues zu versuchen. Dass dies ein Klischee ist, sieht man schon daran, dass gerade Bip-Hop-Artist DOUGLAS BENFORD nicht nur als SI-CUT-DB aktiv ist, sondern neben einigen anderen Aktivitäten auch eine Hälfte der an dieser Stelle ja schon mehrfach gelobten TENNIS ist und auch schon mit Soundtüftlern wie SCANNER gearbeitet hat.

BENFORD kann man guten Gewissens als einen der etabliertesten Bip-Hop-Acts bezeichnen, dessen vor zwei Jahren erschienenen viertes Album "ENTHUSIAST3 mich mit einem gut zwischen Sample-Experiment, Knister-Dub und Minimal House ausbalancierten Sound überzeugen konnte, der allerdings ein gutes Stück spröder und wagemutiger als die mittlerweile ja beliebte Berliner Konkurrenz ausfiel.

STEPHAN MATHIEU aka FULL SWING kannte ich bislang nicht, seine mutmaßlich minimalistischen Produktionen erschienen bislang u.a. bei Mille Plateaux und Ritornell, sowie einem Label namens Fällt, das ich

auch nicht kannte. Da Bip-Hop nicht nur mit externen Künstlern, sondern auch deren Labels zusammenarbeitet, hat sich der Fällt-Einfluss übrigens auch im sehr gelungenen Cover-Artwork niedergeschlagen.

Musikalisch möchte ich die Kollaboration (die meisten Tracks sind tatsächlich von BENFORD und MATHIEU gemeinsam gebastelt worden) in der Nähe der mir bekannten SI-CUT.DB-Produktionen einordnen. Eher rhythmisch strukturiert als im Dub zerfließend, höre ich hier kleinteilige digitale Sound-Schnipsel, die offensichtlich mit spielerischem Geschick in neue Anordnungen gebracht wurden, was in flächige, fließende und beatfreie Soundscapes mündet, die sich einfach gut anfühlen. Die einzelnen Sounds und Töne klingen wie immer bei SI-CUT.DB sehr transparent und krisp, nie trocken und akademisch, sondern irgendwie clever, humorvoll und elastisch, das Ganze wurde diesmal aber (MATHIEUs Beitrag?) des Öfteren in die Breite produziert, was mit seinen merkwürdig unterschwellig wirkenden Soundwellen ein klein wenig an PLASTIKMANs "CONSUMED3 erinnert. Könnte aber auch einfach daran liegen, dass ich diesen Klassiker kürzlich mal wieder angehört habe.

-joe

http://www.whirlypop.de/03_kw47/3.htm

CARELESS TALK COSTS LIVES mag # 1 / UK / November 2003

A collaboration between Douglas Benford and Stephan Mathieu under one of their many aliases, 'Reciproprocess 02' plants microscopic electronica onto ever-shifting sands. Designed to throb that bedroom floor rather than vibrate any dance-floor, here there's barely audible pulses, distant chimes, faint echoes, dank drifts of dub and thousands of tiny textures rubbing up against each other. It's like grasshoppers with degrees in IDM, like moths let loose on scientifically re-wired beat-boxes. And all too often, not only does the noise they manufacture together set heads spinning; it also has those goose-pimples trembling in fear.

Ian Fletcher

BODYSPACE / Portugal / November 2003

O mais provável é que nunca tenha ouvido falar destes músicos, nem imagine que tipo de combate é este. Estamos em terreno puramente experimental, algures entre o electrónico, o dub e o techno ambiente. No fundo, um laboratório de novas expressões deste tipo de música, tão em voga entre outros músicos alemães (lembro-me de Burnt Friedman, Alva Noto ou Pole).

Este é o segundo álbum lançado pelas editoras Bip-Hop/Fallt, da série Reciproprocess (o primeiro teve Bovine Life vs. Komet). O conceito passa por reunir dois programadores num confronto criativo, primeiro apresentando o mundo de cada um, para de seguida, através de uma colaboração conjunta, atingir o tal "processo de reciprocidade" (daí o nome "reciproprocess"). Por esta razão, parte das faixas é produzida por cada um dos artistas em separado, sendo as restantes o resultado do remix do trabalho de ambos. Não se trata de ver quem é melhor, mas antes atingir uma plataforma comum.

Douglas Benford, também conhecido por Si-cut.db ou Tennis, é alemão e o seu álbum mais conhecido é Behind You (1997). Do outro lado do ringue temos Stephan Mathieu (nome de combate Full Swing). Igualmente alemão, foi baterista no grupo de free-jazz Stol até 1998, altura em que se lançou a solo como programador. Descreve o seu trabalho como um "processamento digital de sons", sendo Frequency Lib (2001) o seu cartão de visita.

O processo de composição deste tipo de música passa pela extracção de sons de álbuns de outros grupos ou de instrumentos acústicos, que são tratados por software próprio, de forma a atingir loops tão simples e fragmentados que quase não é possível reconhecer a sua origem. Há uma ressonância/vibração electrónica de fundo, uma parede de som que está sempre presente (como se alguém deixasse ligado um microfone ou como um telefone que fica em descanso). Por trás desta escondem-se ecos, fragmentos, partículas de outros sons. Em "octavia.drive" parece ser um teclado distorcido, em "chlorine.gen" uma torneira a gotear, em "Nerasighted. Gen" areia a escorrer. Há uma intenção de induzir um estado de transe (daí a repetição), sendo que a introdução destes fragmentos de som nos transporta para diferentes ambientes (tanto pode parecer que estamos no campo debaixo de uma chuva miudinha, como em ambiente subaquático).

O conjunto final é coerente mas fica a saber a pouco. Não creio que haja pobreza de elementos, apenas que estas incorporações são de tal forma minimalistas e subtis que é difícil distinguir quem toca o quê. Qual é marca de FullSwing? Que cunho distintivo deixa Si-Cut.db? Se não fosse pelo livrete do CD, não conseguiria distinguir um artista do outro, o que é feito independentemente e o que é feito em conjunto. Talvez seja propositada esta simbiose, esta diluição no universo um do outro, de tal forma que pareça indistinta. No entanto, à medida que fui ouvindo mais não pude deixar de notar que os temas criados por ambos são mais ricos e mesmo mais vivos (destaco cond.verg e divapops.stage).

É difícil definir algo que assenta tanto na abstracção e na subjectividade mas encontro uma boa frase utilizada pela revista The Wire - "acupunctura ambiente". Para quem gosta de ser "picado" por estas coisas modernas.

Sofia Barbosa

http://www.bodyspace.net/album.php?album_id=242

SOMAMAG / Germany / November 2003

"reciproprocess" ist eine CD-Serie, die in Zusammenarbeit der Labels Bip-Hop und Fällt entsteht. Jede CD der Reihe enthält sowohl Solo-Stücke, als auch Kooperationen bzw. gegenseitige Remixe zweier Künstler. Für den vorliegenden zweiten Teil haben sich Douglas Benford (Si-CUT.DB) und Stephan Mathieu (Full Swing) zusammengetan.

Stephan Mathieu hat bereits auf Labels wie Mille Plateaux, Orthlong Musork und Ritornell veröffentlicht. Seine Musik erinnert in ihrer Struktur an die von Komet (Frank Bretschneider) oder Taylor Deupree - sehr reduziert und minimalistisch. Zitat: "For some time now I have been trying to reduce my compositional approach to a minimum by accepting sounds the way they are."

Douglas Benford veröffentlicht schon seit geraumer Zeit als Si-CUT.DB (Bip-Hop / Sprawl / Fällt) und ist ein Teil der Formation Tennis (Bip-Hop). Seine Arbeitsweise ist stark Dub - orientiert. Zitat: "My interest in dub is more in the idea or space of dub; the original concept, to me is of taking a fully formed track and then subtracting material."

Die durchweg gelungene Zusammenarbeit der beiden kommt vor allem in der gegenseitigen Beeinflussung ihrer Sounds zum Ausdruck. So finden sich beispielsweise in den Solo-Stücken von Douglas Benford auch Sound-Strukturen von Stephan Mathieu und umgekehrt verhält es sich ebenso. Daraus resultierend verschmelzen letztendlich all die ruhigen, atmosphärisch knisternden Stücke zu einem sehr ausgewogenen, homogenen Album. Alles fein verpackt im ansprechend aufgemachten Digi-Pack incl. eines informativen Booklets. Was will man mehr?!

http://www.pandemoniumrecords.com/bip-hop/catalog/r_02.htm

URBAN FLYER TOKYO URBAN CULTURE GUIDE / Japan / September 2003-09-04

<http://www.urbanflyer.com/tunes/>