

Bubblegum zine

Interviews

Maryana Klochko
Oleksii Podat
Pilikayu
Palindrome

reviews

'22 music
archival gems

thoughts

Random

underground guide to Ukrainian music

The price for the 'bubblegum zine' is kept as small as possible so that you could spend some money on helping Ukrainian initiatives that deal with the devastating war as you read it.

Markus Foundation

The foundation accepts donations for the effective maintenance of the 47th Ukrainian Assault Brigade where some of our close ones are serving at the moment.



Odesa Dream Team

A small yet very quick and mobile in its operations, Dream Team foundation has been helping Mykolaiv and smaller towns in the South of Ukraine.



Freefilmers



The horizontal filmmaker collective from Mariupol (now based in Zaporizhzhia) supports underground artists, queer people and other vulnerable communities affected by war.

The Blue Eyed Project

The organization operates in deoccupied Ukrainian villages and aims at helping kids and teenagers with their creative projects. They also provide humanitarian aid to children's families.



Happy Paw



The foundation was helping 60+ Ukrainian animal shelters before the full-scale war and keeps providing help now. They also help arrange guardianship or adoption of a pet.

EDITORIAL

In your hands or maybe leaned against a lectern, a wall, or a Cola bottle, is the first ever printed issue of a zine that previously was only available on the web. It was already a zine then, as it's always been free, passionately written, and as much DIY as the web interface could bear. It started in January '21 with me making polite remarks about things I didn't like in Ukrainian music and, less often, the things I cared about, and withstood the pandemic, my band recording and releasing an EP, me quitting two jobs and moving into a new flat, and, finally, Russian troops invading my country on a full scale.

The idea of the bubblegum zine is finding that lightness and bounce the great music has to offer in various genres and sounds of Ukrainian underground and independent scenes and showing that there's more to Ukrainian music than meets the eye (or, in this case, the ear). This idea proved working with a Ukrainian audience, as through it I met great music devotees and, eventually, friends, some of them collaborate with me on this very issue.

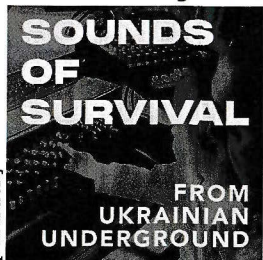
Ukraine is deeply involved in post- and neocolonial issues, such as poverty, corruption, and, for the last 8+ months, imperialist war, but its music and culture evolve on the largest ever scale. This zine is dedicated to the current state of Ukrainian music and I hope for you to get at least a glimpse of how good it is.

Olena aka buddhist bubblegum

UKRAINIAN FUNDRAISING

Besides the noble goal of fundraising money to help Ukrainians on the frontline and under shelling, the compilations of 2022 could serve as great starting points for getting to know Ukrainian underground music. Here are six of them

Sounds of Survival From Ukrainian Underground



[NOLAND]

dub, tribal, reggae, funk

A collaboration between the Berlin-based label NOLAND and one of the oldest Ukrainian independent labels SKP Records gathered tracks from musicians that have been keeping the Ukrainian underground alive for the past 20 years. Its prominent figures are Serge Dubrovskiy aka Dubmasta and Oleksii Mikriukov aka King Imagine. The picture of the old-school Ukrainian underground they're painting here, both with their multiple projects and guest spots from their friends, is drowned in dub, rich with experiments, and not without a tinge of the 1990s Kyiv avant-garde. Anti-imperialistic nature of the compilation 'parent' genres goes well with such flavoring.

ВОЛЯ

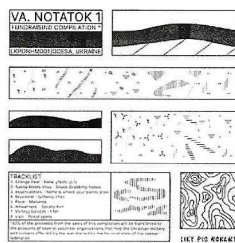


[Muscut]

sound collage, glitch ambient, avant-pop

Experimental and perhaps just a bit highbrow label Muscut has substantially widened its sound palette with ВОЛЯ (Ukrainian for 'will') by introducing several new artists with a unique sound. Some of them come from occupied territories, others have been living outside Ukraine for a long time but identify as Ukrainians. Noisy collages of Kavkazka Sound peacefully coexist with Radiant Future's electronic retro moodiness and Emblika Quail's gothic avant-pop. Chiller's jazzy surf gem is the moment you can finally breathe out after a quiet but tense ride through all kinds of electronic experiments. The most multigenre release of the selection.

VA. NOTATOK 1



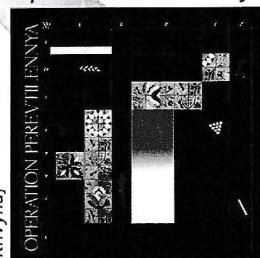
[Liky Pid Nohamy]

experimental, field recordings, neoclassical, spoken word

The first release of a newly formed label captures the sound of 2020s Odesa, a foggy city by the Black Sea (and my hometown) with its crumbling 19th-century apartments and echoes of the late-night parties' sounds lingering in the morning light. Liky Pid Nohamy's founder Viktor Konstantinov is in it as Polje with an ornate minimalist/white noise piece that gathers other Odesa artists around: that's how a disorderly jazzy track (by Orange Peel), a spoken word rendition of an old kozak tale (by Vichnyj Gandzh) and a beautiful piano etude buried in field recordings (by vixiii) get through to us.

COMPILATIONS '22

Operation Pervtilennya

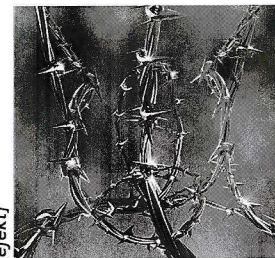


[Khvyliia]

electronic, darkwave, indie rock, hip-hop

Another newly formed label, Khvyliia (Ukrainian for 'wave') tries to capture Kyiv independent music scene of the moment with its first release, a 13-track multigenre journey. Band-camp liner notes say that the compilation was meant as a way of coping with the war experience, both for artists and listeners – this intention doesn't show itself right away, but it surely serves well to its overall tightness. Starting with sound design and ambient pieces, Operation Pervtilennya slowly progresses to conventional pop/rock song structures to end with dark club and hip-hop bangers. This is the closest you can get to the pre-full-scale war Kyiv Saturday night experience.

indefinite state



[ejekt]

leftfield, experimental, field recordings, downtempo

From its start in 2019, ejekt label has been true to its unique sound, which I would call 'central Ukrainian left-field' for the lack of a better term. The indefinite state compilation is so far the best representation of its protean nature: containing 6 metamorphic tracks that, in one way or another, bend and mess up the electronic genres of the past 30 years, it creates a sonic world of its own. Minimal techno, breakbeat, future garage, dub are pointed out as references only to be pushed aside the next moment. What ejekt and (its sisterly label) Pep Gaffe community are doing right now is probably the most genuine shift in Ukrainian electronic music.

SESTRO



[система | system]

experimental electronic, illbient, avant-pop

SESTRO is the Vocative form for the word 'sister' in Ukrainian — such a name was chosen for a fundraising compilation with the goal of helping women and LGBT+ people in regions affected by war. The content of it is far from conceptual and a bit on the chaotic side, but if you choose to listen to it as a label sample pack, you will most likely be rewarded with some gems. Since 2014, система | system have been releasing open-minded artists from Ukraine and beyond, so you can easily choose one of the 23 tracks you fancy the most and go for the full artist's release on their Band-camp page. In most cases, you won't be disappointed: experiment and artistic vision are the priority here.

Laptop Intimacy

Oleksii Podat is a composer and producer that works in the realm of experimental/power electronics, noise and ambient. His way of making music is entirely through field recordings he then distorts on his laptop. He's also an admin and a star of a Telegram channel/underground community *lolfuck*: a beautiful junkyard of pop music tropes, leftist and local scene memes and oversharing.

You said that your latest single* was only released to make a profit on Bandcamp. Is it a problem for you to release music during the full-scale war?

I released it because I needed money, those tracks were OK, and I simply love releasing music. I was deeply impressed by the photos my mom had been sending me from a village in the Carpathians. I persuaded her to leave Sloviansk** and go someplace safe, but she's worried about it all the time. So when she's outside making photos, that at least takes her mind off the war for a while.

So far I disliked everything that's been released*** since the invasion. As for myself, I don't fancy releasing tracks so often, but that's just how impatient I am. I am captured by the thought of recording a full-length album and getting all my talented friends into making it, but working on a record for a long time is a privilege. I have a dayjob, you know.

You've changed several monikers (CHSZM, AAAAA) but your working principle never changed. What's the deal?

Yes, the principle is always the same. I get stuck with dramatic melodies, overdramatic even... I was hoping my way of work would change with each new moniker but it didn't, so now I just go by my name. Once I decided that I would never buy gear. What for? Do I have that much money? I only use my laptop. It's the most intimate thing in my life: so many traces of your life there, so many personal files! You've had some intimate experiences with it, have witnessed historical events through the screen. I work and live my life through the laptop. You don't spend that much time with synths. Besides, I'm lazy and to this day know very little in terms of production, so guess it's a 'fake it 'till you make it' kind of thing, not the real knowledge.

* "my mom sends me photos from relatively safe places"

** a city in Eastern Ukraine

*** by Ukrainian musicians

But maybe it's something else? Talent, perhaps? There are things that you cannot separate from a person that makes this particular music.

No, you cannot, but I think that's how I perceive creativity: any person is creative, so I make music and someone else grows trees. I don't know why mainstream thought is different from that. I don't think about music as something written about me on Wikipedia.

You always point out that you're from Sloviansk. For the past few years, one could have noticed this huge cultural impulse coming from the East: very grassroots, very powerful. To me, you're a part of that bigger movement. What's Ukrainian East for you?

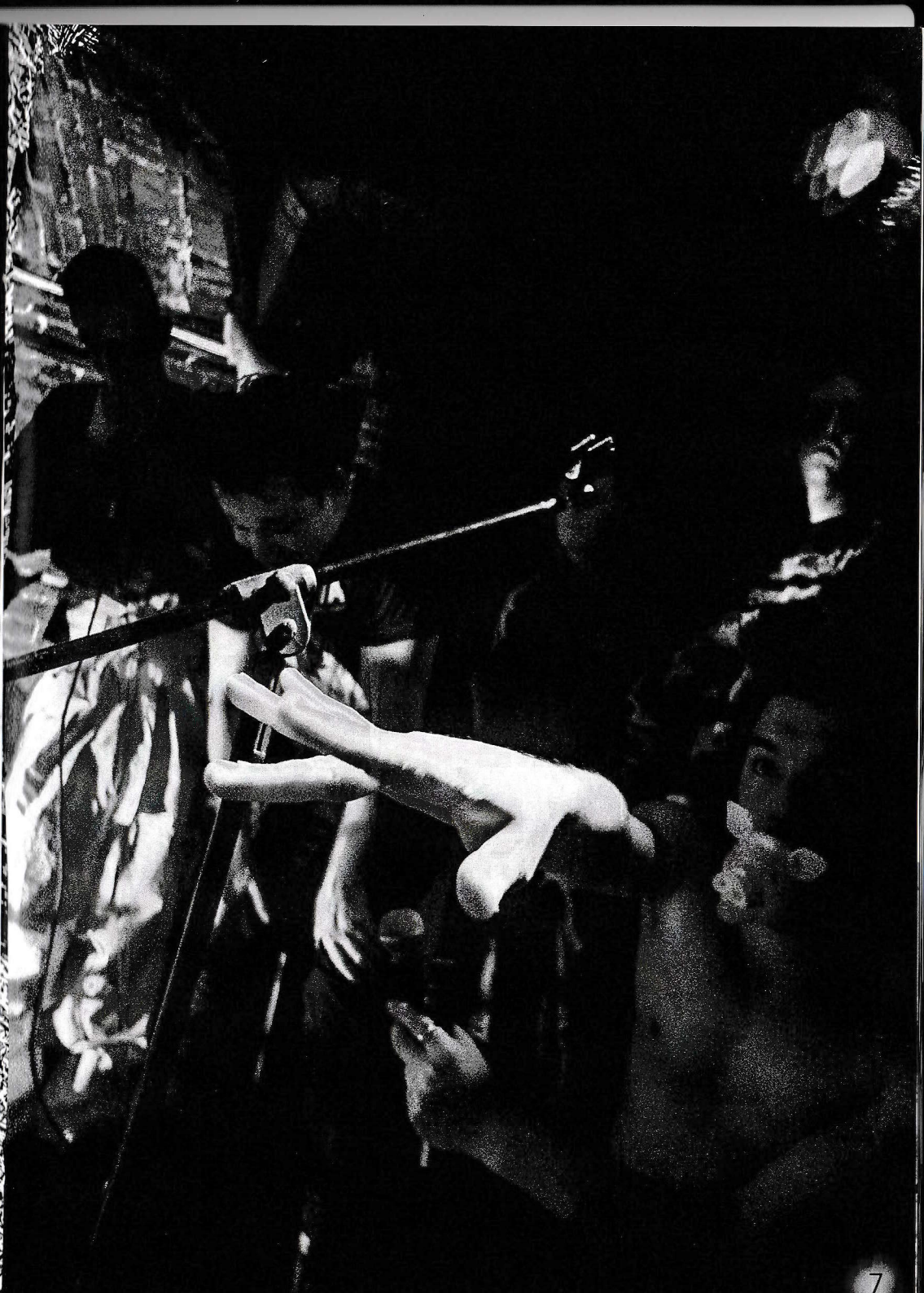
I think what you say is more about the myth of the region than about the region itself. The land is not mythological, but the creative process is a mythologization of feelings and thoughts about what's around you. The regionalization is more about marketing trends. And with globalization and technology access... I use technology lots of other people have. There's nothing coming from the East that makes you register it as Eastern straight away. I keep on saying that I'm from Sloviansk because it's the town that needs recognition. There are people living and working there. By giving shout-outs we keep it alive.

May 2022

Oleksii is planning a 2023 European tour
If you know a place that can host him
please contact him on social media



Ukrainian musicians gained more visibility worldwide this year, as many of them have been touring Europe and beyond. But inside the country, the music scene never ceased its activity. In fact, Ukrainian underground culture is now more active than ever with regular shows, performances and fundraising projects. Emotional Anhedonia, probably the wildest live act of 2022, share some powerful gig memories.

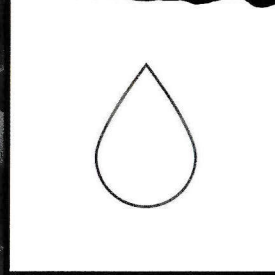


'22 Ukrainian Essentials: Electronic, Experimental

Oleksii Podat
bach ep [self-released]



Oleksii Podat
the language of tears,
I speak to tragedy in it (Single) [self-released]



Oleksii Podat' (interviewed on page 4) takes a dive into the pre-origins of his melodic strength by de/reconstructing two Bach pieces on his laptop. His trademark grainy noise emphasizes the baroque solemnity that is still there when the environment needed for such music to exist has vanished completely. The effect is the one of the Mona Lisa on a cellophane bag. With *the language of tears...* that was released less than a month after, Podat', rich with new knowledge, returns to tragic digital love storytelling soaked in baroque polyphony and passionate yet reserved spirituality.

John Object
Life [self-released]

A 58-track compilation of everything hidden beneath the surface throughout the whole musical path of Timur Dzhaferov: producer, visual artist, bass player, writer/reporter, and, as of 2022, soldier. From the early 2010s soft ambient pieces to the first timid playing with glitches and distorted samples to the IDM/electroacoustic works and, finally, to the devastating clarity of melted and rearranged sound universe that is totally his own, this collection could seem like too big an experience to take in one listen was it not so well stitched together by the personality of its author.

tofudj
Take [Pep Gaffe]

The first full-length bunch of tracks from the Pep Gaffe resident, musicians' favorite musician and sound wizard tofudj is a sonic world of its own, alive and breathing, moving freely within rhythm patterns and sound spaces. The production is impeccable, with rhythm and texture morphing into one another, and field recordings blending in with electroacoustic and electronic sounds. The music itself is never redundant but there are occasional moments when just like that, out of the blue, you find yourself in the midst of kaleidoscopic beauty (Take 3 or Take 4), the overall effect having more in common with natural phenomena than any existing music genre.



VA
Stop-Zemlia OST [ESSE Production House]

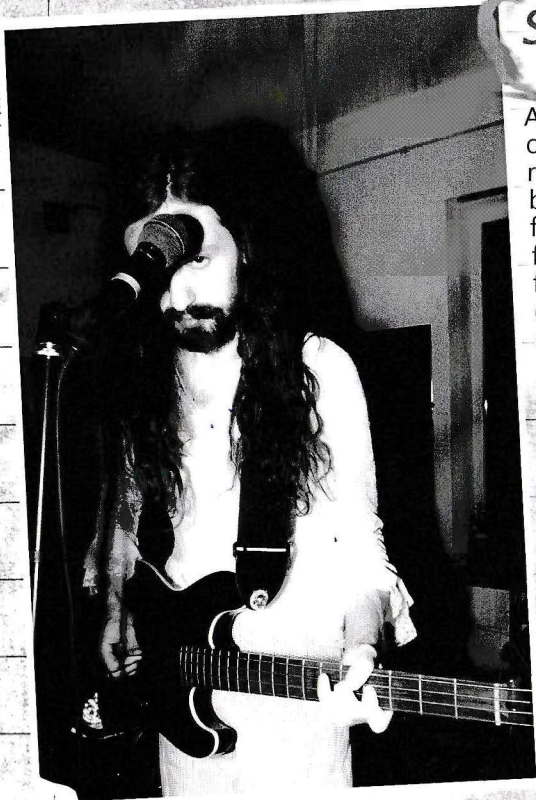
2021/2022 winter cinema coming-of-age hit *Stop-Zemlia* by Kateryna Gornostai painted a picture of high school romance and friendship in the late 2010s Kyiv little to none of us had but pretty much everyone wanted for themselves. The soundtrack, compiled by the director herself from Ukrainian underground tracks of the past two decades with additional themes by experimental composer and producer Maryana Klochko (interviewed on page 14), is a treat of its own. With gentle to raving electro- and avant-pop and sparse electronic pieces from Klochko, it places you right in the middle of a peaceful Kyiv evening just as much as in your high school memories.



Katarina Gryvul
Tysha [Standard Deviation]

One of a few records released pre-full-scale-war that instantly made it to the final top. *Tysha*, Gryvul's second LP, marked the transition from quasi Scandinavian avantpop to pure experiments with epic collage and deconstructing (decomposing even!) sounds and structures. It's also the first music she's ever released in Ukrainian, although the words of these icy folktales are mostly obscured by the dizzying production. If wintery *inside the creatures* seemed to be buried under layers and layers of snow, *Tysha* is spring locked inside a slowly melting glacier.





Solidarity in Sadness

A person in charge of the greater part of Ukrainian DIY, Pavlo Olefirenko has recently opened a vegetarian snack bar in Lviv and used it as an excuse for not releasing a bunch of music from his several projects: one-man freak-folk band Pilikayu, a postpunk duo Товариство "Радість"* , indie/avant-pop enterprise Продукти** and punk rockish Молодці***.

Now you opened Traven**, you have also been involved in making gigs, playing in several bands, as well as solo. What's next? A record label? You do all those things because there's no one else to do that?**

No one else does that, yes, but I'm also curious. As for the label, I used to have one, 260tapes records! But I lost my password to its Instagram page. It was a cassette label, I recorded them all by myself, but got sick of hand-cutting the tape.

Before the interview, I listened to both your solo albums and wonder now what you plan to do next as Pilikayu.

I went to play with a live band and planned to release an album "Це ж несерйозно"***** but it's not easy to record a live band properly. I've been playing these songs for a few years and want to record them in the best way possible. There are 4 or 5 almost fully recorded albums from my several projects but I have trouble releasing all of them. A postpunk record by Товариство "Радість"* should soon be ready, as well as an album by Молодці. For the latter, I even came up with the title: "Будь ласка, не змушуйте мене займатися продажем своєї музики"*****. For each of them, I want to find the best release moment, but there probably won't be more than 100 listeners, so I might as well just drop them.

* Joy Association

** Products

*** Nice Fellows

**** Ukrainian for May

***** It's not really serious

***** Please don't make me work on selling my music

***** Woods

As a project, Pilikayu is all about this slacker aesthetics, most of your songs are odes to sitting there doing nothing. But you work in IT and manage lots of different cultural activities.

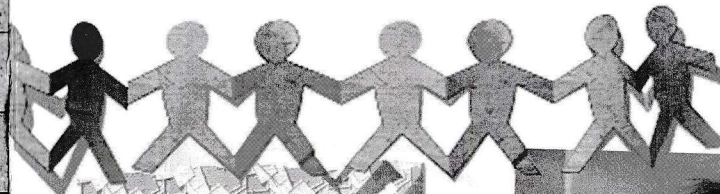
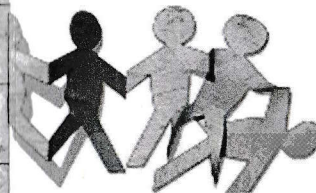
Half of the songs on "Це ж несерйозно"**** are about the doldrums and being out of work: laying on the sofa, keeping capitalism from growing — that's what my song "Бур'ян"**** is about. Computer programming is just a way to make money to pay for your food. You either make money or feed off those who make it.

Music by your projects usually goes by such tags as avant-pop, lo-fi pop, outsider pop, post-pop... All of them, however, include the word 'pop' and I keep thinking about pop art as a reference when it comes to your music.

When it all started I often put different genre tags on my music but now I'm sticking with avant-pop. I am drawn by the untypical use of sound and instrumentation, lyrical topics that are usually overlooked. At the same time, I don't want to dive deep into serious avant-garde, keeping it free and comprehensible.

I want to be honest and instantly express my emotions: if you feel lazy, you sing about laziness, if you're sad about little things, someone might think that stuff does not matter, that you should be ashamed, but you express yourself that way. The purpose of music is to understand that you're not alone in feeling like that. If you meet someone who shares that emotion, even if it's sadness, you're not alone anymore, you have solidarity in sadness.

June 2022



When in Lviv, have a veggie doner and say hi to Pavlo at Traven

Address: Пекарська 1С / Пекарська 1Ц

Pop-Kultur



Polje
Kombinezon*
 [система | system]



The first LP from Viktor Konstantinov, the man behind the project, is totally different from anything he's ever done. It's also different from anything else on the Ukrainian music scene. Kombinezon is an outsiderish pop experiment in filling out the gaps in the mythology of the Ukrainian south with the city of Odesa in its center. As Konstantinov points out, the record was not so much a genre-centered undertaking as a process of organizing 'the set of sounds, instruments and ways to use them.' The result is at times chaotic, unwieldy, and impossible to pinpoint, but if you look closely, so is Ukraine itself.

*Ukrainian for 'jumpsuit'

'22
Ukrainian
Essentials:
Indie Pop
&
Rock

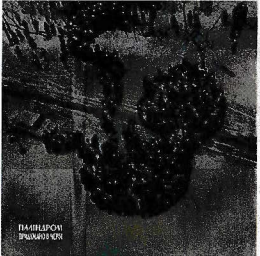
Pree Tone
Heavier Than Usual
 [self-released]



On their third LP to date, Ukraine's genuine shoegaze/psychedelic rock act stopped toying with pop song structures and moved head-long into what they

do best: building up immense structures of badass guitar riffs, drones and noises, with sunshiny druggy psychedelia around the seams. The 40+ minutes record has only two tracks: a heavy post-rock wilderness and a spaced out ballad with no words but peculiar guest appearances from cello and saxophone. Additional point goes to the quality of recording: Pree Tone sound huge live, and this record comes closest to the actual experience.

паліндром
 (palindrome)
Придуманo в черзі*
 [self-released]



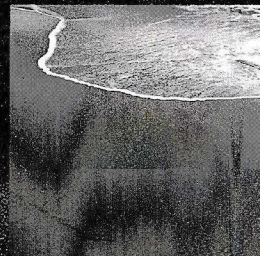
Stepan Burban** is as much a singer of his native city and its myths as Polje, but when it comes to context, their spaces are completely different. Where Konstantinov invents his own version of Odesa chanson, Burban covers a local Lviv cult, Lesik Band's "Рекет" (Racket). Nevertheless, the outcome is just as effective. A metalhead and a fan of old-school hip-hop, Stepan somehow doesn't mind being a pop icon, and on his third LP embraces his pop sensibilities full-scale, mixing Ukrainian schlager style with 21st century electropop and hip-hop, and stopping just a step away from "zastolni" wedding synth tunes.

*Composed in a Queue
 **interviewed on page 18

Bad News From Cosmos

Music of the favorite Ukrainian pop band of mine seems to dwell in a space of its own, and I'm immensely grateful for this space to still exist in these dark times. In fact, in 2022 the BNFC output has even grown compared to previous years.

Plastic Little Parts (Single)
 [self-released]



Let's (Single)
 [self-released]

Two of the duo's three released singles are two sides of their unique sound with crispy noise pop *Let's* on its sunny side, and mellow and moonlit *Plastic Little Parts* dusted with fifty-ish retro pop nostalgia on the other.

Pustosh
P-songs (EP)
 [self-released]

Pustosh made a promise to release their first long-play as early as at the start of 2021, but this EP is their most extended (pun unintended) release so far. Marking the start of a new, more mature era for Ukraine's most unique alt rock band, it boasts of simple yet amazing grooves, inventive bass and drum parts (two primary instruments here), and rhythmic switches. Written and recorded before the full-scale invasion, lyrically *P-songs* represent a craving for better world dressed in psychedelia-infused philosophy and grunge chords. Pustosh started



out with songs in Ukrainian, and although English is probably more convenient for songwriting, it's not perfect here and takes away a bit of the record's authenticity.

Sonic Relationships

For a couple of years now, friends and random Internet music obsessives have been sending me the link to Maryana Klochko's SoundCloud profile asking if I knew about this Ukrainian hidden gem and insisting that I should check this out. I knew, of course, and as soon as there was an opportunity to see Maryana live, I seized it and became a convert as well. In a space between a pop song and a sound experiment, Maryana tells enigmatic stories where the setting is no less important than the plot.

You're notorious as 'the artist without records'. Are you scared to make a solo record* or is it simply the lack of time?

I'm in a constant process. Always looking for projects that can earn me money and setting the work on an album aside. I have tons of material, but I search for the best final version for each track and then try putting them all together, to see if they fit. Still, it's impossible to get everything you love into one record. With the start of the full-scale war, I got more anxious about it: anything can happen now, either to me or to my laptop, so in a weird way it motivates me to finish recording. But there are lots of mixtapes, live recordings... almost everything is on the web.

A live show seems like the most natural way of experiencing your music, it perfectly captures the feeling of being in the process you mentioned.

I used to have this concept of not making final versions of the songs for the release straight away because they change all the time. Imagine that you meet a friend and then you fall in love with them but you have this long friendship before that. This friendship is the time when I'm not releasing the songs: I look closely as they change, sometimes even spoil... just like relationships...



**Maryana has released tracks on several compilations and made movie soundtracks.*

Your lyrics usually seem random, like you're just playing with words but one can still get a feeling that it's something personal they're listening to.

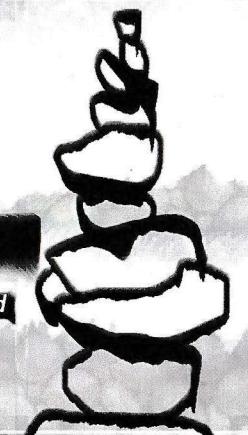
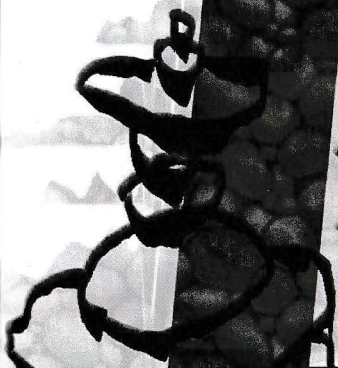
I don't think about music when writing the lyrics, I just write them down occasionally. Very often it happened that I had been sleeping and right after that made some notes on my phone. I like for the lyrics to be flexible when it comes to meaning: I won't simply tell you a story about me going to the forest, there will always be something else for you to read into it. That's what happened with the song *Babusia* (Granny): many people thought it was about drugs but it was simply a retelling of a newspaper article.

When you started out, it was simple singer-songwriting with the guitar, so I presume it was lyrics-based songwriting. How it happened that you switched to electronic music?

My electronic music seems very acoustic to me. And I think, it builds very similarly to what I did with the guitar. But I like the freedom of it. You can put anything into one track: a guitar, some field recordings, some crazy rhythmic dance piece. And I am still a singer-songwriter: all of my tracks are the stories I tell. I rarely write instrumental music because I cannot get enough of this opportunity to tell something to others.

August 2022

Since the beginning of the full-scale war, Maryana has been extensively touring Europe. Try and catch her up in your city.



Two Ukrainian music insiders choose their favorite releases since Ukrainian Independence

Archiwal

Ivan Shelekhov

Writes about music occasionally. Specifically interested in independent, local, experimental, traditional etc. A resident at "Ostriv" platform for science and arts (Kyiv).



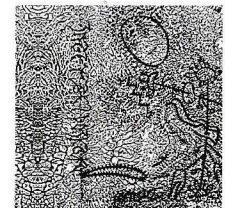
Foa Hoka
Не-відомість (Nie-wiadomość)*
[KOKA Records] (1996)



"Nevidomist'" is roughly "uncertainty" or "obscurity". In this case, I'd even call it "non-notoriety". For thirty-plus years, Foa Hoka has always been somewhat of a curator's band. Coming from the old city of Chernihiv, they were tightly connected to the original indie scenes of the two biggest Ukrainian cities, Kyiv and Kharkiv. The Polish recorded and released Nevidomist' is a genuine post-punk in a wider sense, not a genre cliché one. With minimalist electric spaciousness, acid synth patterns and abstract poetry in Ukrainian. The latter is performed with efficient charisma, and the incorporation of traditional songs here sounds organically contemporary.

Svitlana Niano & Oleksandr Yurchenko

Znayesh Yak? Rozkazhy**
[Delta Shock] (2017)



The epitome of avant-folk was recorded the DIY way on tape in mid-90s Kyiv, then the city of rather slippery opportunities. It sounds almost like a radio play on the mystical matter, with subtle references to various European mythologies. This ethereal but uncannily coherent record may be an entry point to the heritage of both artists extraordinaire yet to discover. Svitlana's haunting soprano and repetitive Casio with Oleksandr's analogue sound artistry (the hammered dulcimer, custom sound effects and an enigmatic string drone instrument) unfold the title's meaning in the listening experience.

Riasni Drova Consort
Вісь***
(2020) [self-released]



It's hard to write about one of our most interesting free improv acts regarding the death of its founding member Oleg Vorobyov on the frontline as a warrior. Lviv's trio of distinct polymaths has not only been heavy on early Ukrainian and European music but also clung to personal folklore, literally performing traditional songs kept in the family. Some say that with this war the known tendency of Ukrainian musical sadness has to shift, but as one of the artists presented this delicate recording of glowing sound, it's not authentic singing but authentic life.

Worok

Ganna Bryzhata

Plays bass in Chillera, produces dubbed out ambient pop under Bryozone moniker, is a huge Odesa sound apologist.



Indirect
Ab Pharmacy
(2014) [Muscut]

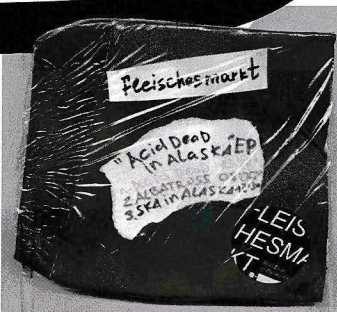


Ab Pharmacy

Odesa-based krautrock band fell apart after more than 10 fruitful years, but at least we have this record as an artifact of the city at the time. The cover art is a photo of a stained-glass window in an old pharmacy where the band's first rehearsals and recording sessions took place.

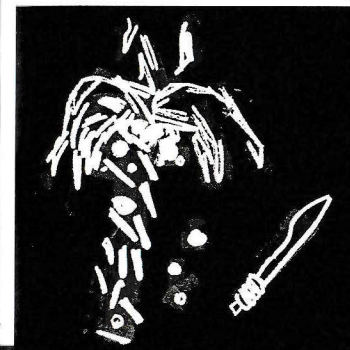
Fleischesmarkt
Acid dead in Alaska x Taras on Xtasy
(2009) [self-release]

A great case of a fully DIY release. The package looks like a pack of meat from Odesa Pryvoz market. And inside, there's a meaty sound of acid kraut!



Mlin Patz
Sunlimit
(2019) [Muscut]

Brave and experimental, this is a record that sounds like nothing else. Mlin Patz masterfully combines guitar mantras, field recordings and melodic supple bass. At the moment of this album has no place in reality: you cannot get to the pre-2014 Crimea southern bank, but you can unpack the space and time carefully put into this record and get the feel of it. That's what the power of music is for.





Found Memory

Stepan Burban is best-known for his project Паліндром (Palindrome) where he mixes synthwave and hip-hop with nostalgia-soaked lyrics. It started out as a fun project on the side but very soon got a small-scale army of followers: for many young people, his music became an entry point into Ukrainian independent scene. Lately, he's been giving sold-out concerts and taking guest spots at Ukrainian talk shows. He doesn't really know how that happened.

For many listeners, your music has the quality of a found memory about the childhood in Halychyna*. If, for example, they come from other parts of Ukraine by listening to your music they could make it their own. Was it the initial plan?

Someone said to me once that I invented the past that has never been there. People that have never been to Briukhovychi** and don't know what that is visited it in this way (through the song). But I never thought of that while I was writing it. I wanted to get deep inside my childhood, ponder upon it and then simply release what I found there. And when you release it, it's no longer yours. It works as some kind of a mechanism that launches the feeling of nostalgia: it doesn't even have to be my childhood. Everyone has their own memories of that time.

After the first two LPs, that were intimate and full of nostalgia, you released several singles that dealt with the sociopolitical situation and commented on Ukrainian reality. Does it bother you that someone may say you're moralizing?

No, I will never become a 'moralizing artist,' as you put it. It's just the phases I'm going through. I wanted to take a look at what was happening around me, in my home, in my country, and, of course, I noticed that it was far from perfect.

*a region in Western Ukraine with Lviv as its administrative center

**a small town outside Lviv where people go to relax on their dachas

I used to make socially conscious hip hop in Глава 94 (Glava 94), but it was very childish then, like some Fight Club movie or something. Hopefully, now I've grown older and wiser.

You put so much energy into your work, I would say, much more than most indie musicians around: making videos, throwing gigs, releasing a song every few months. And, as far as I understand, it's not always re-paying. What makes you not stop?

This question has no straight answer. Music is not my whole life, but it's the part of my life that, if taken away, will make it miserable. I cannot not make it, even if I don't get any profit from it. Although I'm a happy musician because last year I finally got some money from concerts and streaming platforms.

I've been also thinking about your 'holy mission' to change the perception of Lviv, your native city, through your music.

Yes, I think I'm provoked by the clichés and I want to show another Lviv: not the one with missus drinking coffee, like they did in the Austro-Hungarian empire but also the one without ugly development projects from the 2000s. So it's Lviv of my childhood I mostly turn to. It gives me the feeling of something vintage and warm, with the voices of TV and radio announcers. That's why I use their samples in my songs. I think our perception of Lviv is changing at the moment, just like it's happening to all of Ukraine. It's happening to Ukrainian music as well.

May 2022

Palindrome and his backing band will most probably tour Europe soon. Don't miss them!



Playlists & Expectations

All the music mentioned in this very first bubblegum zine issue can be found and bought on Bandcamp. Your support will mean a lot to us and to Ukrainian music

After you enjoy everything we've gathered here, you can wait for 2023 Ukrainian releases with us

Potreba Group - User Experience

Debut LP from nu jazz/motorik quartet filled with experimental wilderness.

*organ.ed - nevidomist**

First of many singles from a guitar experimentalist with a peculiar mix of post-industrial and ambient pop.

YUVI - n/a

Either EP or a set of singles from an experimental artist that seldom mixes art pop and jungle.

all options - n/a

Cool and weird electronic leftfield experiments from the Pep Gaffe community producers.

Heinali - Kyiv Eternal

Set of ambient prayers for Kyiv.

Chillera - n/a

Longplay of solid surf/dub/psychedelic material from beloved Odesa trio.

*Kurl - Хмари***

A double single of the gleaming psychedelic pop from my own band (Olena speaking).

More great Ukrainian tunes of 2022 are available for listening in bubblegum playlists on various platforms

Check them out!



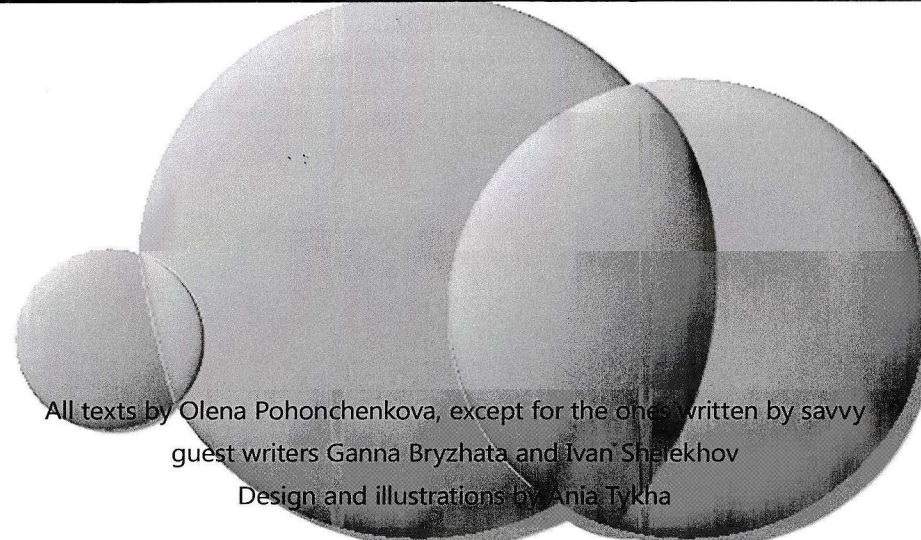
Spotify



Apple Music



SoundCloud



All texts by Olena Pohonchenkova, except for the ones written by savvy guest writers Ganna Bryzhata and Ivan Shelekhov

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*uncertainty

**Clouds



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ЦЕНТР

