



DRUMS OF DEATH

This Glaswegian native is a demonic performer who crawls from rave to grave every night. Expect face paint, garage loops and re-mastered house tracks with a metal and rave influence. Intrigued? Well we suggest you check out 'Got Yr Thing' and his remix of Peaches 'I Don't Want to Loose You.' Performing live, D.O.D rolls with a crew of hooded face painted musicians who thankfully won't rob your purse but will provide you with a selection of banging tunes! Last year he supported Peaches on tour, but now he is back from performing solo and is busy putting the finishing touches on his album 'Generation Hexed' which will be out on Greco Roman in July. There is a free remix out now from Philly beat master, Starkey, check it out!--HJ

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Notion



MEANWHILE, IN THE CONGO...

THE CONGO SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO THE BROOKLYN OF WORLD MUSIC OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS, WITH A RAFT OF INDECENTLY GOOD BANDS. THE HIGHLIGHT OF LAST YEAR'S RICH OFFERINGS WAS THE ACHING SAMBA OF PARAPLEGIC STREET MUSICIANS STAFF BENDA BILILI, WHO ARE THIS YEAR DUE TO PASS THE MANTLE ONTO KONONO NO1.

The band - in many guises and musical mutations have been playing in their home country for the past 44 years, but with the release of their new album, Assume Crash Position, and on the back of a handful of dates supporting Bjork, they are set to gain worldwide recognition.

Konono No1 utilise a raft of homemade and modified instruments, including everything from drums manufactured from car parts, to megaphones dating back the country's colonisation by Belgium, to thumb pianos which are delicately tuned to produce microtonal differences in pitch and create the warmth and depth of sound which characterises their new album.

And what an album it is. Assume Crash Position is like nothing you've ever heard... It leaps into life with a pulsing, softly thumping rhythm section and

layers of thumb pianos which riff on repeated refrains of just four or five notes to mesmerising effect. It sounds almost like an African take on trance, overlaid with emotive chants and the occasional high shrill of a whistle piercing the mix.

The music you hear on the record isn't exactly how the band sound when they play live - which, for the most part, is still weddings and funerals. When Konono No1 take to the stage their songs are improvised, freeform affairs, with tracks locking into hypnotic grooves that last for up to half an hour. On record these compositions have been condensed into raw, driving blast of energy with - rather oddly - a bass player and electric guitarist from a Konono No1 cover band drafted in. But don't worry about the tracks being too watered down for the album release: Makembe, the forth number on the record, clocks in at just over 10 minutes of trippy, junkyard beats which build towards a crescendo of distorted counter-melodies.

The band also have their tender moments, such as Nakobala Lisusu Te, the closing track of the album. It's a stripped down affair featuring just Mingiedi - the founder of the band who is now in his seventies. He gently teases flurries of notes out of his thumb piano, which sound like rain softly falling on corrugated iron, while over the top, in mournful tones, he sings a sad lament about how marriage has become too casual.

It's a beautiful, heartfelt ending to an album of boundary-defying tracks which will appeal to world music devotees and fan of Yeasayer and Vampire Weekend alike. Now, go and listen to it...--RD

ASSUME CRASH POSITION IS RELEASED ON MAY 17 ON CRAMMED DISCS.

FOR THE WIN

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Even in the music and fashion, we know that there's a World Cup on this summer. Nike have somewhat more of a vested interest (if you'll excuse the pun) and these racer-back tops are a part of their World Cup range for 2010. In collaboration with graphic designers and illustrators from six countries (England being represented by the brilliant James Jarvis), they've come up with capsule ranges of sportswear that reflect the national identity, so you can wear your national pride, literally, on your sleeve.--SL

