

Whistle Pig Saloon



Whistle Pig Saloon is the live audio collaboration of Robert van Heumen (Computer/controllers) and John Ferguson (Guitar/effects).

Wide and disjointed, blending a fractured pulse with dynamic texture, this is an immersive and disorientating music, sometimes subtle, often invasive, always close. In capturing a moment and inscribing agency, the motionblur of the cover art offers a suitable metaphor for this duo's musical interactions. Live sampled source sounds are gesturally manipulated and reworked within open ended narratives, sounding like an air whistle blasting out from an old steam locomotive as it emerges at speed from a tunnel. Whilst the whistle pig/groundhog (day) reference explores cycles of repetition beyond episodic improvisation, emphasising the value of revisiting and re-appropriating a previous moment. John configures the electric guitar as a site for multiple simultaneous points of interaction and queries the iconic cultural status of his instrument via feet, fingers and feedback. Robert crunches, growls and smashes both John's live sampled sound as well as his private stack of industrial bits and organic beats.

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Robert van Heumen works with sound: electronic, experimental, improvised, structured, composed. Recent works include the compositions 'Stranger', 'Fury', 'Silent' and '12 Bullets' which are performed in multichannel and semi-improvised environments as well as produced for release on CD. As a musician he uses STEIM's live sampling software LiSa and real-time audio-synthesis and algorithmic composition software SuperCollider. He is active as a member of the electronic audio-visual trio SKIF++ (with Jeff Carey & Bas van Koolwijk), noiseband Man in the Middle (with Nicolas Field & Tom Tlaim), Shackle (working with electro-flutist Anne LaBerge on restriction), electro-acoustic sextet OfficeR (with Koen Nutters cs.), founding member of the N Collective, and has shared the stage with dj sniff (Takuro Mizuta Lippit), Michel Waisvisz, Richard Barrett, Sakata Akira, Nicolas Collins, Oguz Buyukberber, Luc Houtkamp, Guy Harries, Morten J. Olsen, Daniel Schorno, Roddy Schrock, Audrey Chen, Nate Wooley a.o. His soundworld is a mixture of digital crackles, heavy distortion, melancholic melodies, environmental sounds, voices, sounds from kitchen appliances, most of the time smashed beyond repair. Van Heumen is Managing Director of the STEIM foundation in Amsterdam, curator of the Local Stop concert series and member of STEIM's Artistic Committee. In a previous life mathematician, trumpet player and software programmer. He still reads L.E.J. Brouwer.

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John Ferguson is an electronic musician. His work is inspired by notions of instability, and focuses on tactile approaches to the live manipulation of audio/visual materials. Predicated on listening and real-time (re)negotiation, his combinations of hacked electronics, wireless gaming controllers and custom software/mechanical systems are frequently loud and exuberant. But the resistance inherent within these instrumental ecologies significantly affects the compositional process, raising issues of causality, agency and legibility, whilst foregrounding ambiguity as an alternative to functionalism in interface design. John is active as one half of the Tron Lennon improvisation duo (with Paul Bell), involved in multiple collaborative projects with Bennett Hogg, and has shared the stage with Atau Tanaka, Gwilly Edmondez, Graeme Wilson, John Ayres, Mat Postle, Bill Thompson, Adam Parkinson and Will Schrimshaw. He is currently a PhD candidate in Music based at Culture Lab, Newcastle University (UK), where he is writing his thesis and teaching on various undergraduate modules. He recently completed a short European tour culminating at Club Maria in Berlin where his work with Tron Lennon was nominated for the Transmediale award 2008. Through this project he has also contributed to the Leonardo Electronic Almanac (Vol. 15), Fool's Gold (Edinburgh College of Art: Issue 1) and Soundmuseum.fm.

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