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Music

INSTAL08,
THE ARCHES, GLASGOW
NEIL COOPER

★★★★

THE last time a major counter-cultural figure came to Glasgow was when Noam Chomsky spoke at the Self-Determination and Power Event in 1990. So to have Gustav Metzger, the founding father of auto-destructive art, as the figurehead of this year's three-day festival of left-field music showed how far Instal is attempting to locate itself from any old-fashioned notions of a gig.

Metzger was the inspiration behind Self-Cancellation, in which artists explored the implosive possibilities of sound. With tubas filled with sand and sounds generated from the building itself, the effect was of an alchemical cabaret-cum-science class.

There was little science involved in Energy Births Form, Saturday's three-hour extravaganza in which bassist Alan Silva, sax player Donald Dietrich, and the cream of Japan's underground attempted to 'blow their minds, as well as the audiences', into a state of transcendent bliss. It was good-natured, though Kylie Minoise's five-minute private shows got there a whole lot quicker.

Sunday's Marginal Consort event was another marathon, with Japanese veterans conjuring up a maelstrom of junk-box din to create an electrifying convergence of space and purpose. With such breadth of form on display, why the conservative redneck boogie of MV & EE, and old-time hippy protest music of The Golden Road and The Cherry Blossoms ended up closing the festival is a mystery.