



Instal 06 -

photo: David Winton

**INSTAL 06**  
**THE ARCHES, OCT 13-15**

This year, Scotland's most formidable festival of experimental music did away with crowd-pulling big names in order to showcase a far wider variety of the kind of music that has long been bubbling away underneath the mainstream. However, this increased scope meant that a lot of groups suffered from a lack of context, and for a festival which tries to open such music to curious listeners, it could do well to provide more history lest some of these musicians are mistaken for novelty acts.

After some flat performances, despite the presence of the world's longest string instrument, the scuzz-no wave punk rock of Oshiri Penpez brought some much needed high-energy hijinks to the Friday night as their spastic-hyper jazz provided a backing for a theatrically self-harming loon.

Saturday began to the sound of sparklers connected to contact mics sizzling, and the sonics of metal contracting and expanding echoed around The Arches in fascinating ways, but quite outwith the control of artist Lee Paterson. The sax/drums duo of Steve Baczkowski and Ravi Padmanabha was the next highlight, as ferocious eyeball-popping baritone skronk danced over intricate and heavy drum rhythms. Pure fire music! Keiji Haino is the dark lord of avant-rock, and his duo with experimental violinist Tony Conrad served as a primer to all his techniques, from explosive guitar pyrotechnics and digital Theremin to fallen-angelic vocals. Travelling some vast, unknowable narrative, the pair mesmerised and summoned spirits which are probably now trapped in Glasgow.

Jazkamer's noise fest - propelled by one grindcore and one black metal drummer - was an exercise in stamina if nothing else. The link between black metal and extreme noise is an interesting one to explore, but beyond the breathtaking percussive assault, there was little substance to their 'Metal Machine Music'. Security clearly didn't want a repeat of last year's Hijokaidan performance, and quickly put a stop to anyone even considering headbanging.

Sunday arrives to the sound of

Sachiko joining heavenly vocals and manipulated noise in a gorgeous and spiritually violent stew which must have left some more ghosts in The Arches. Throat singing through tin foil and sound-boxing through a bass clarinet, Arrington De Dionysio lent real meaning to the platitude of the voice being the original musical instrument.

For a festival like this to work, risks need to be taken and boundaries pushed. For any listeners who were willing to take the same risks, the program provided a valuable, almost indispensable gateway to experimental music. [Ali Maloney]

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