

EUROSONIC FESTIVAL 2014: FOCUS ON AUSTRIA

The Alpine pop-music landscape has been undergoing a remarkable upswing in recent years: more and more extraordinary artists are gaining recognition beyond the Austrian borders, Vienna's club and producer scene is booming, and festivals like Waves Vienna have emerged. All this is reflected at Eurosonic Noorderslag, where Austria will be the focus country in 2014.

Eurosonic Noorderslag is the most important showcase festival in the European live music industry. The 28th edition of the Dutch festival will take place from Wednesday 15th to Saturday 18th January 2014 in Groningen, the Netherlands with the spotlight pointing to numerous performances by Austrian musicians. The focus on Austria at the Eurosonic Noorderslag 2014 is a great honor and a huge opportunity for the local music scene. It comes at a time when a lot of young and exciting acts in Austria are coming up in all genres that will benefit from taking center stage at the festival.

The first confirmed Austrian acts for Eurosonic 2014 are **Ja, Panik, The Vegetable Orchestra, Sex Jams, Ghost Capsules, Koenigleopold, Tirana and Russkaja.**

Austria will also be prominently involved in panels and presentations within the Eurosonic Noorderslag conference, which is used by local labels, agents, managers and bookers to exchange with international delegates. On top of that there will be an Austrian networking reception bringing together European and Austrian music professionals.

The festival has already become an important showcase platform for Austrian artists in the past years. 2014 will show more Austrian bands at the Eurosonic Festival itself and subsequently on European festival stages than ever before. A lasting and sustainable effect on the entire Austrian music industry is expected. Titled **Austrian Heartbeats** the accompanying campaign aims to reveal the current pulsating music scene, exploring its nature that might be hidden beneath the surface of stereotypes. Eurosonic 2014: Focus On Austria is organized by Austrian Music Export (mica-music austria & Austrian Music Fund). (More information: www.musicexport.at)

EUROSONIC NOORDERSLAG

Eurosonic Noorderslag is dedicated to the newest European artists. The most promising acts in their homeland, but often unknown outside the borders of their home country. The festival is the main European showcase festival and is supported by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and Yourope. For Eurosonic Noorderslag 2014 Austria was named as the Focus country. Each year a different country is highlighted, showcasing the diverse musical talent across Europe. Other countries who have been showcased at previous editions include France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, Norway, The Netherlands, Ireland and Finland.

The **European Talent Exchange Program (ETEP)** is an initiative of the Noorderslag Foundation to stimulate the circulation of European repertoire on festivals, radio and media in Europe. Each year ETEP brings together the leading European festivals, radio and other media and stimulates them to 'exchange' a selection of artists. Since the start of the ETEP program in 2003 a total of 1646 shows by 605 European artists were presented at the now 80 ETEP festivals. (More information: www.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl)

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AUSTRIAN ARTISTS AT EUROSONIC FESTIVAL 2014

EUROSONIC NOORDERSLAG | GRONINGEN, NL | JANUARY 15-18, 2014

KOENIGLEOPOLD

Koenigleopold, the versatile artist duo from Austria are an outfit not so easily described or their output fully comprehended – at least, the main part of their artistic output is music. Despite being in their early twenties, they already gained high acclaim in the fields of experimental music, jazz and theatre. But what they actually do is much more accessible as this list might suggest.

“Avant-Garde meets Disco” is a term that had been stretched while trying to describe what they do, but that doesn’t do them justice at all. It’s Cut Up, it’s Dada, it’s Freestyle, it’s everything-rolled-in-one and mostly: Entertainment with an edge. (www.koenigleopold.at)



RUSSKAJA

A metal-head dancing the Kazatchok with a polka fan might be an unusual sight, but high-speed musical sensation Russkaja offers the perfect soundtrack to just such an event. Serving up a mixture of wicked polka beats, trash metal, world jazz and Zappa-Rock, Russkaja are probably the most successful innovators in what they call “Russian Turbo Polka Metal”.

After more than 300 concerts since 2006 all over Europe and great success in their home countries, their first major breakthrough came in Germany with 4 concerts at the world’s greatest Metal festival “Wacken Open Air”. These appearances were swiftly followed by shows at Chiemsee Reggae Festival, Nova Rock, World music and Jazz festivals and more than 30 festivals across the continent only last year. Sounds like a contradiction? No, it’s a statement! (www.russkaja.com)



SEX JAMS

Sex Jams are straight out of Vienna’s throbbing underground DIY scene, and are a thrilling live act that spit out spontaneous bursts of pure pop and overdriven noise-fuzz capable of disarming the mightiest of opposition.

Their album Trouble, Honey packages Punk-pop with neatly dovetailed ambient soundscapes and is a record that brings together in unholy matrimony the pop panache of Blondie with moments that could be Dinosaur Jr at their fuzzy finest.

They perfectly blend anarchic, smash-the-state sincerity with nerve-wrenching soul and dream-laden pop. XFM-London’s John Kennedy recently called them his new favorite band. The last year Sex Jams have been touring Europe from London to Belgrade, from Warsaw to Barcelona, where they hit infamous Primavera Festival. (www.sexjams.net)



GHOST CAPSULES

Ghost Capsules make music for the night. Their beats and loops are cool and calculated, but emotion courses through each of Gomez’s lyrical statements, wreathed as they are in tales of pure fantasy. Electro quartet Ghost Capsules can trace their beginnings back to a Bomb The Bass gig in Vienna. Here it was that Tim Simenon, touring the ‘Back To Light’ album, met his support band that featured drummer Roman Lugmayr and keyboard player Georg Lichtenauer. The three hit it off, so much so that Tim relocated from Amsterdam to



the Austrian capital. Here the missing piece for the Ghost Capsules jigsaw was found in singer Laura Gomez.

Ghost Capsules released their self-titled debut album in 2013 to great acclaim and made a number of festival appearances in Austria, including Popfest, Frequency and Waves Vienna, as well as playing shows in Germany, Belgium and Slovakia. (www.ghostcapsules.com)

JA, PANIK

In 2009 Ja, Panik record "The Angst and the Money" in their newly adopted home Berlin. The album is much discussed not only before its publication - Ja, Panik have quickly made a name for themselves and are already compared to legendary German bands like Blumfeld and Tocotronic.

On their recordings, the band manages to keep the balance between rock and "Hamburger Schule", Lou Reed and Bob Dylan, and to strike a compromise between straightforward, energetic music and puzzling, yet complex, discursive lyrics full of eclectic citations and references. Their fourth studio album, DMD KIU LIDT, was recorded in ten days in Berlin-Neukoelln and was released in 2011. The band's development process between the two albums is clearly felt. And as always the title is a mystery: „Die Manifestation des Kapitalismus in unserem Leben ist die Traurigkeit“ - or translated, "The manifestation of capitalism in our lives is sadness" - is highly original, obsessed with detail, nervous and eccentric. It is only logical that today, they're known as one of the best alternative rock bands in the German-speaking world. (www.ja-panik.com)



THE VEGETABLE ORCHESTRA

In these days The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra celebrates its 15th anniversary. In addition to performing on the international concert circuit, the 12-people collective from Vienna has spent the last dozen years experimenting with the building of vegetable instruments, industriously unearthing the acoustic universe of roots and legumes, cabbages and courgettes. All the instruments used are exclusively made from vegetables: from fresh as well as dried plant material such as carrot, leek, celery root, artichoke, dried pumpkin and onion skin. The sounds produced by the vegetable instruments are amazingly multi-layered. Stylistically the music oscillates between organic pop music and aural sound experiments, with inspiration from various sources. Invitations to renowned festivals such as Sonár in Barcelona or to Huddersfield seem an obvious consequence. (www.vegetableorchestra.org)



TIRANA

Drowned out vocals melodically complimented by complexly beautiful guitar work. Tirana (formerly known as Plaided) is influenced by 80ies L.A. Punk and the Riot Grrrl Movement, composed music for films and has a considerable history of touring in Europe and the USA, including an appearance at renowned showcasefestival, SXSW. (www.tiranamusic.tumblr.com)
