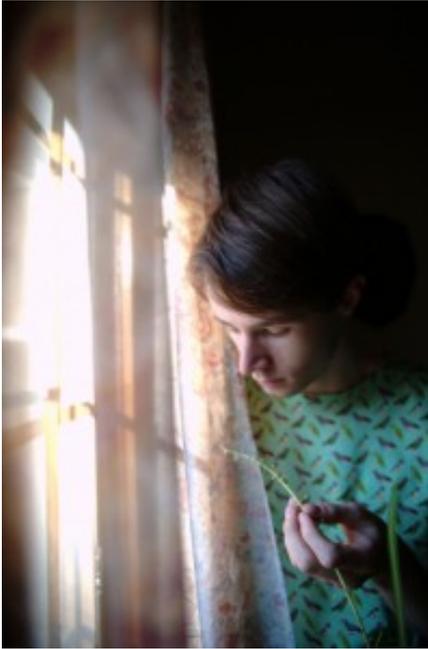


<http://www.wqaq.com/interview-with-derek-piotr/>

Interview with Derek Piotr

[October 29, 2014 11:31 am](#) | [Chris Sanchez](#)



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When did you start making music? What inspired you to start making music?

I was in choir and took instruments as long as I can remember, since childhood. I always had the impulse to sing for the class or generally make music, I think of it as a form of optimism. my first experience with electronic music came at 15 when I downloaded the freeware editor Audacity and began cutting up samples I had ripped from Encarta Encyclopedia, and singing on top of that, and chopping the whole thing up. I still find the process of digitally processing voice extremely rewarding; in my opinion it's one of the most exciting sounds producible today.

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How would you describe your sound for any newcomers to your music?

This is always a challenge for me. Generally if I get asked what my music is like and I am with company, I turn helplessly to my friends in the hopes that someone can explain it more accurately than I can. I guess I would say it's outsider pop with heavy emphasis on editing and production, and my aim is always to make something beautiful that personally wakes the listener up, and is encouraging. I want my music to give people comfort, while still remaining totally alert.

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What are your biggest musical influences, and how does that inspiration apply to crafting your own music?

My biggest influence might be the work of Antye Greie-Ripatti, who records as AGF. I discovered her debut record very early on in my musical journey, and have been very fortunate to collaborate with her in recent years. find her work at poemproducer.com. otherwise, my influences tend to change and I shed old layers as I acquire new ones, or else it is cyclical...right now influences are Stravinsky, Kevin Drumm, Lata Mangeshkar, Antony and The Johnsons, Fennesz...

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Can you explain the song writing process for your music? How do you go about making it?

Each time is a bit different but I do tend to keep folders of sounds I've made sorted by month and year, and if I feel I have made some kind of decent headway (whatever I define headway as!) on a piece in the space of a day, I may go into these folders and see what would fit and what doesn't, so often this means trying different textures against beats, or taking vocals from months prior and putting them on the chopping block. although I often begin to write with a specific piece or song in mind and work towards that...try all sorts of editing to get the story out...involve other players or producers...basically anything to serve the song and have it be the best produced but also most human it can be...

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What are some challenges you face when it comes to the thought process of making a new album?

I'm incredibly fortunate in that a new universe for a particular album presents itself organically to me and I don't have to plan...for instance my latest album, Tempatempat was the product of me toying with a preoccupation I had with gamelan, and the album grew from that initial impulse...or the album I am working on now I knew would be focused around woodwinds...I think the sound world comes first and the rest of it nestles into place.

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Are you planning any upcoming live shows? How do you feel about your live shows, and how does it differ from your typical music producing process?

I am currently working on pieces for my forthcoming album with a few musicians, kind of in the form of duets...I have a bass clarinetist that I am working with, an Ondes Martenot and vocaloid player, and a classical composer working on turning some tracks into wind trios...these are all separate endeavors but are linked for me, the reason: I am interested in expanding my oeuvre into other's processes, and have felt a bit stuck behind a laptop for the past few years. so most of these "live duets" will be ready in the Spring...I had one test run with the Ondist and it went quite well...and I am still performing solo with laptop as well.

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What do you think of the current music scene in your area, have they been supportive of your music?

Connecticut doesn't have much of a scene for what I do but I am quite fortunate to live extremely close to Manhattan, so most of my shows are in New York...which of course is an incredible haven for outsider artists like me.

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What routes have you taken in order to make your music heard?

I think it is always important to have your voice heard, to stand behind the work you do, and to realize that there is room in the world for so much and that something that might kill someone's mood for the day will save someone else's life...but also learning how to communicate with the world in a way that is respectful to both parties, you and them, is crucial. Communicating your message is a scary thing and you can face intimidation and fear of rejection but through the years it gets easier to put your ideas across and believe in your message. Also staggering is the fact that we have unprecedented access to media now thanks to the internet...so I try and take what I do seriously and make an effort to liaison with press and listeners...I am incredibly grateful to the internet for providing this forum for all sorts of amazing miraculous works, so it doesn't make sense to take a passive role in getting your own work out there!

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Do you have any tips for aspiring musicians?

Believe in what you do. Try and block out external influences and hear the sounds that are in your head (this is the hardest thing to do, but a healthy exercise). Try and make your voice heard above the din, but have patience. Respect others' time and work and it will come back round. But above all: serve the visions and desires that come to you and do what feels right to YOU!