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Inside, a circuit of 13 or some floor, running around a central court yard with plastic grass, a vending machine and a couple of broken benches.





水 機  
No. 1000000



The different floors host a multitude of offices and shops. Of these, no other hint than a brief tag on the doors is given. The anonymous building hosts anonymous activities. Needless to say, the complete lack of information about the contents of this structure means that its fruitors come for specific needs and desires.



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What the building hosts, is largely left to imagination or need. They cater to hyper specialized demands, an offer that categorizes this place as an epitome centre of consumption. The stores range from uninteresting offices, to baseball trading cards, to robusera and a huge amount of pornography in the widest variety of offer.

These stores don't appreciate being photographed, nor its customers. What I can do, either than visually documenting them, is verbally describing what I myself have seen. It does not surprise me much, nor scandalize me. Just in front of Seibu Shinjuku station one can find videos of labrador dogs penetrating pregnant women. What did surprise me though was a dvd I found in a gay sex shop in Daikan plaza. Homosexual and lesbian pornography is usually banned from any "normal" video and sex store. That retailer in Seibu Shinjuku keeps lesbian videos next to zoophilia and BDSM section.

It was a dvd case, with no inscription on it, mostly black, with just a black and white photocopy of the image of a gazing eye in the front cover. No further information was given on it. I didn't bother to ask the clerks. The price of the dvd was mesmerizing: about 100.000yen. What images could be worth so much? I started thinking about the hidden content of that item.

Could it contain bestiality, paedophilia, regular pornography, rape, death, or maybe just nothing special, just an overpriced banality?

One cannot but proceed by negations in wondering about its core. It is pure profit flowering from the unconscious, from the unknown. The expectations about what it might or might not be became to me so overwhelming, I felt numb at the sheer feeling of holding it in my hands. I felt what Bataille calls the “heterogenous”, all that is repressed, left unconscious and largely ignored but always present, what is disfunctional to the civilized life and that threatens to rise and swallow all the constructed and the existing.

“In sum, when we come to found this knowledge, which is beyond nonknowledge, this teaching which is that of the death of thought, we cannot be surprised, and if we always encounter this stagnation, this way of advancing against the grain and against the meaning is simultaneously poison and cure since this resistance by counter meaning is itself against meaning.”(Bataille)

Linda Williams defines pornography as “the frenzy of the visible”, but if we amalgamate this definition with the Surrealist belief in the omnipresence of the erotic in the world, in all things and moments, the invisible as well, we come to the deconstruction of desire, leaving a void which is open to constant fulfillment and desire. We experience a flow, a subtle alteration, continuous and dramatic.

I think of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "Body without Organs", the limitless flow, unconstrained, desire itself which can never be satisfied and defined. Nietzsche's Dionysian which, like noise and death, is the threatening world, both the sacred and the profane, a constant state of liminality and flow. For this, it has to be kept controlled, reconciling death and life in the shape of ritual sacrifice. By concentrating desires in epitome centres like Daikan Plaza, leisure is regimented, controlled, and can be incorporated in the layers and geometry of functional lives. Like Kurt Schwitter's concept of Merzbau, "Cathedral of Erotic Mysery", the Merz style embraces both the organic and the geometric.

Noise music monumentalary artist and iconoclast  
Masami Akita adopted this name for his projects,  
Merzbow.

Following Foucault, society is nothing but carceral, everything is there to discipline us, and power is first internalized in the body of the individuals. Humans as debris, commodities, interchangeable units of a nameless order. Tokyo, with its lack of space, its cramped aluminium low roof houses, its squalor and decay, the persistent consciousness of a disaster to come, the imminent and contingent always overexposed. Through Shibuya, Shinjuku, Ikebukuro, any place is the same, the industry of desires is so large and articulated, one is just hypnotized by it.

I think of Barok in Koenji, where one can find coprophilia and snuff films from Bangladesh. Of Miki in Takadanobaba, one of the first robusera stores. Of the 300 or something dead bodies found every year in Kabukicho. But it all seems so ordered and well organized. Like any department store, like Odakyu or Seibu, everything is kept at its proper places, and the items always available. The only rule is not misplacing them, otherwise the constant flow of transactions could break.

Following Bataille, in the opening of a wound one enters the beyond, and the sense of pain, of wrongness itself is what keeps it open and corrosive.

I think of that video as a virus, like William S. Burroughs considered language and the naming of things. Once exposed, as death, it spreads to the entire organism, and alters it, interferes with its usual development. By sacrificing our old selves by a simple and sporadic contact, we obtain a new state of being, like the transformative rituals Van Gennep studied. It works through contagium and imitation. The self is decentered and respatialized, and enters a wider sensorium.

When Attali In “Noise. The Political Economy of Music” thinks about the audibility of the city, about drawing a cartography of noises, I also wonder about a cartography of desires. In a city of electric wires, air system cables, bundles of trains and connections, of structures of passage and duties, the lines which are followed by the sexually aroused individual would constitute an urban and psychological ethnography worth tracing. But I don`t think any of these individuals would be much cooperative. Desires are private matters, consumed in the intimacy of our homes and minds.

But still, Tokyo offers cells of sexual fulfillment, from soap land to Daikan Plaza. The variety so unthinkable, desires leaves the realm of flesh and enters that of the imagination. Merzbow too defines “Japanese sexual culture as a world of the imagination”, and “noise as the unconsciousness of music”. Following this I read Daikan Plaza, and many other places, as the unconsciousness of sex.

I think of those doors in Daikan Plaza as drawers of our minds. Anything could be beyond it.

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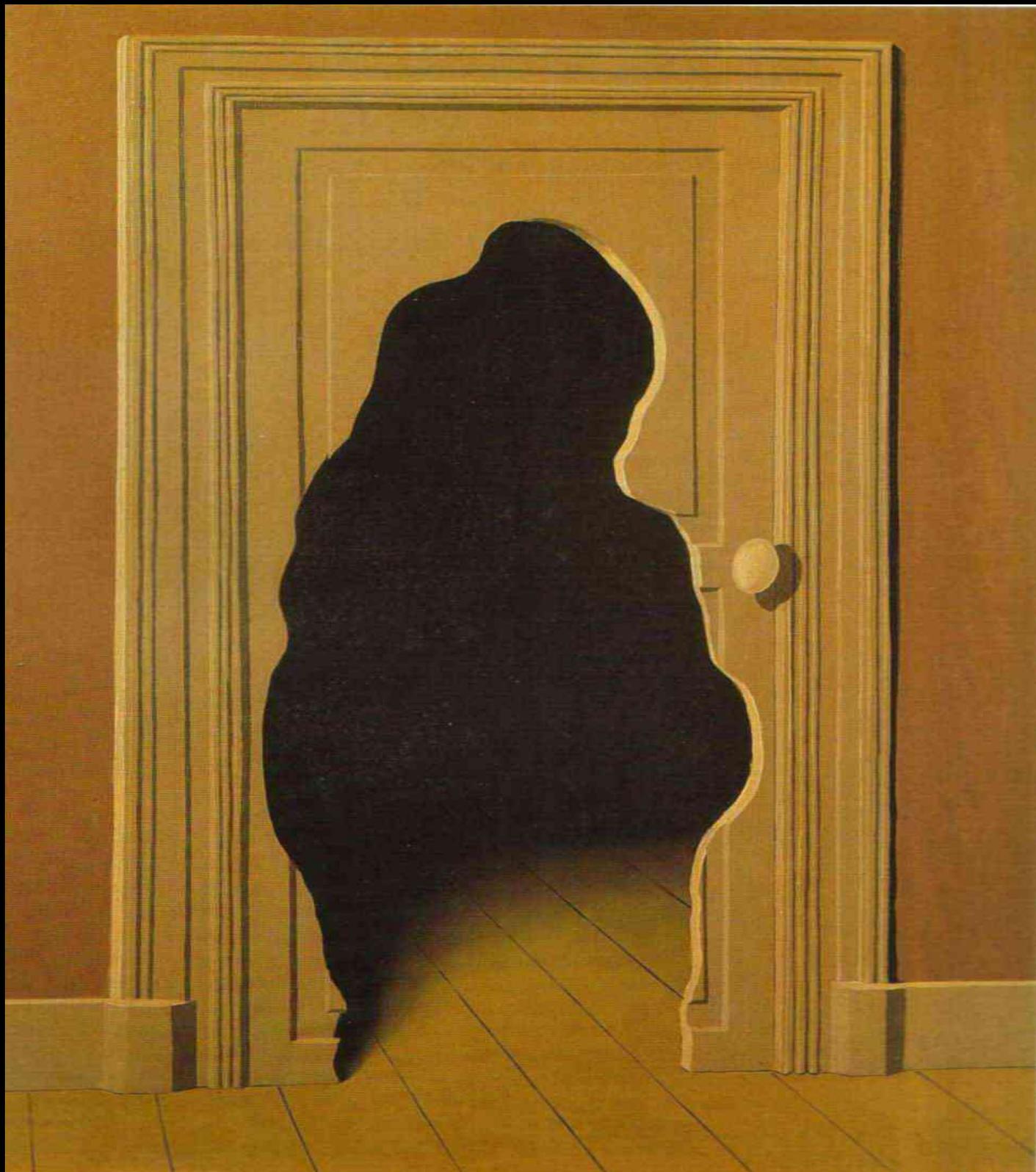




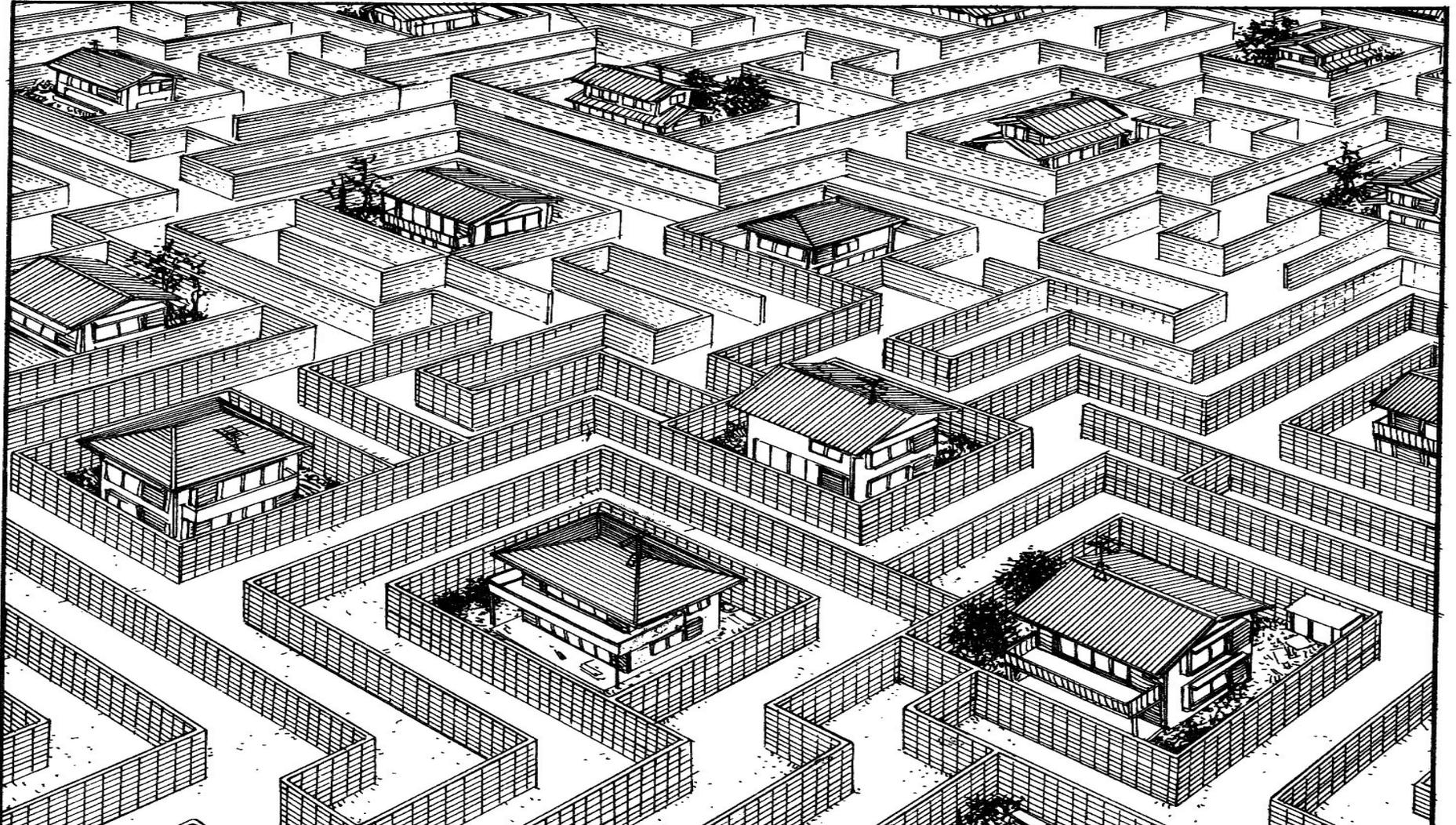
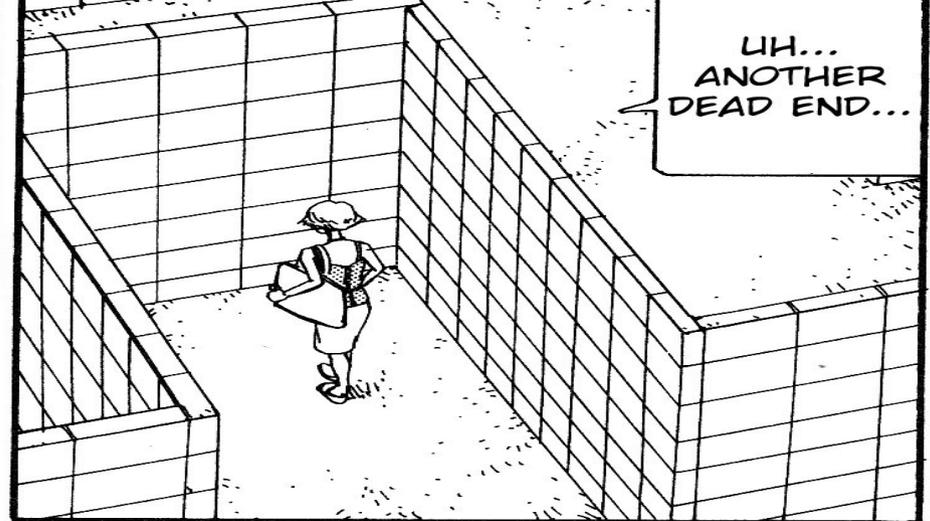
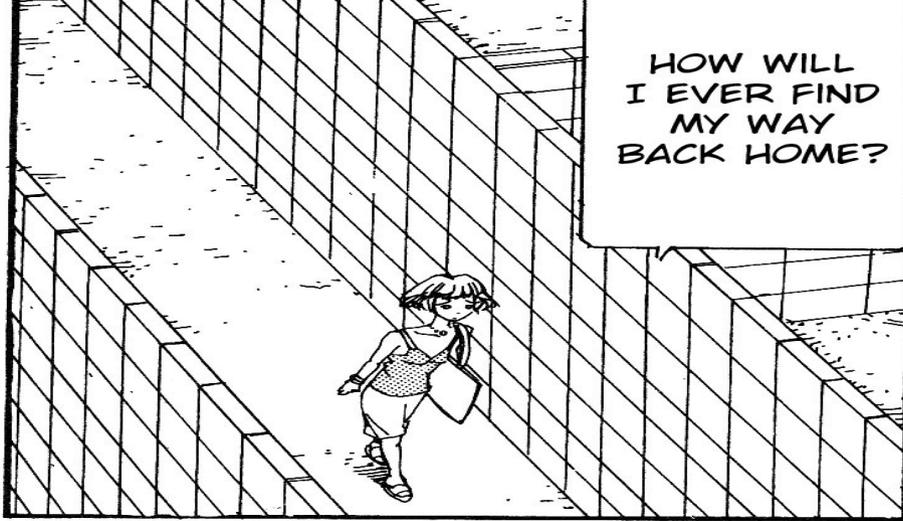
Giorgio de Chirco "Ponte Sperimento"

1930, olio su tela, 100x100 cm

Collezione della Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea







Merzbow started experimenting with raw sound and music in the early 70s. Like many other Japanese experimental musicians, it was progressive rock, mostly German, either than avant-garde music, the starting point. He would experiment with tape, distortions, discarded objects and waste, and let it interact and melt one into the other. He would send these tapes by mail, leave them in people`s letter boxes, and wrap them in fragments of porno magazines and books. He called it “Pornoise”, and today still, after more than 30 years, he composes oppressive noise soundtracks for BDSM performances, and writes books on Sadomasochism and sexual deviations.



“Noise is a weapon and music, primordially, is the formation, domestication and ritualization of that weapon as a simulacrum of ritual murder.” (Attali). It is between the spaces of social codifications that desires, obsessions, passions arouse. If Medieval Florence`s alleyways were sewers and secretly hosted sexual encounters consumed in the filth of feces and waste, the tight interstices between building in Tokyo might as well serve the same purpose. Infact, here people pass out in pools of their own vomit, homeless people find a desperate refuge, rape takes place. “What we have been waiting for all our lives is the disordering of the order that suffocates us.”(Bataille). An overindulgence in male sexual desires in a city, Tokyo, constantly filmed and controlled by security cameras, useless security personell, the scrutinity of citizens`gaze and observation. As a foreigner I feel constantly watched, stared at.





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撮影禁止



But all has to be orderly consumed and performed. Daikan Plaza serves as a public exhaust of all the individual has archived in his mind, and genitalia.

What happens when his instances leave those rooms, those cells, and take over the streets? “When I threw away books and rallied in the streets, I was thinking of turning the city into a book... By abandoning printed books in my study and walking into the streets of this city, books paradoxically begin to have greater and wider meaning in my thought”. (Terayama Shuji) What if his exhortation was to be followed, and excesses of desires and imagination were to be relenquished into the public sphere?

Vaneigem defines the development of urban milieu as capitalist domestication of space, “Modern capitalism, which organizes the reduction of all social life to a spectacle, is incapable of presenting any spectacle other than that of our own alienation. Its urbanistic dream is its masterpiece.” But when the borders are crossed, and “People can see nothing around them that is not their own image, everything speaks to them of themselves. Their very landscape is animated. Obstacles are everywhere. And they were all interrelated, maintaining a unified region of poverty” (Debord, quoting Marx) ?

The city itself would mystify itself in the form of desire. All reality would end up being dominated by them, tyrannically, a fascism of lust and unspoken would gain control. For satisfaction of one`s own desires is a project which concerns the individual only, the others would be obliterated, erased, subjugated by our inner selves. A world out of one`s will (or unwillingness), it would aim at the absolute, then reach it and burn, taking along others in its entropy. By blocking the flows of the Body without Organs, the State keeps a close eye at its prole.

I wonder what the people that received those tapes, or rather “ready makes”, in their letter boxes, covered in strips and bandages of pornography, thought about. The scandal of (mediated, since censored) bare flesh and penetration, and then the surprise and terror of those tapes of hissing metallic convulsions and unbearable frequencies. A vortex, a maelstrom attacking their daily lives. The letter boxes designed to receive bills, advertisements and words, now a womb for abusive experience.

Or what if commuters on trains, instead of playing PSP, decided to watch obscenities, or read pornography and unleash their desires on a random passenger?



For Chtechglov, “Cities have a psychological relief, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes which strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones.” If we were to apply the concept of “derive” to our perception of the city, walk it and read it as cinematic sets in which we create new situations, new exceptional routines, resituating our own being and looking, turning it into a playground, a mirror of our excesses.

Hidenobu describes the loss of human dimension in cities, the depersonalization, the constrictiveness of an illusional created harmony. Deleuze instead, suggests the creation of circuit breakers. The Situationists developed the concept of Unitary Urbanism and Psychogeography. A bulletin of the Situationist Internationale reads: "Unitary Urbanism is opposed to the temporal fixation of cities. It leads instead to the advocacy of permanent transformation, an accelerated movement of the abandonment and reconstruction of the city in temporal and, at times, spatial terms. Unitary Urbanism is opposed to the fixation of people at certain points of the city as well." Debord specifies:

"Psychogeography as the study of specific effects of the geographical environment (whether consciously organized or not) on the emotions and behaviour of individuals", and aims at creating situations that will transform the ways we normally perceive ourselves in space and time.

“When freedom is practiced in a closed circle, it fades into a dream, becomes a mere image of itself. The ambience of play is by nature unstable. At any moment, ordinary life may prevail once again. The geographical limitation of play is even more striking than its temporal limitation. Every game takes place within the boundaries of its own special domain.”(Debord). When the “permanent curfew”(Vaneigem) is breached, the order of things told suddenly cracks, and may collapse. “To the Situationist Internationale, whose interest was inhabiting space, the “derive” brought appeal in this sense of taking the fight to the streets and truly indulging in a determined occupation. The “derive” was a cause of preparation, reconnaissance, a means of shaping situationist psychology among urban explorers for the eventuality of the situationist city.”(Vaneigem)

A repetitive society the one we live in, the absolute absence of a project. Tokyo has no urban project, buildings will be amassed one on the other until the whole structure collapses, or be swallowed by an earthquake. “Because our societies have the illusion that they change quickly, because the past slips away forgotten, because identity is intolerable, we still refuse to accept this plausible hypothesis: if our societies seem unpredictable, if the future is difficult to discern, it is perhaps quite simple because nothing happens, except for the artificially created pseudoevents and chance violence that accompany the emplacement of repetitive society.” (Attali)



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冷湿保管



平販売  
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テニスマスターズ到来  
クラブ会員  
シングルコート  
ダブルコート 受付中  
3320.8631

Denny's













テレコムセンター

If we were to fill all those moments where we act as ourselves, but in fact perform a rule and obey a predetermined social standard, with what unconscious excess compels us, how would those places and times change?

The Walkman, or perhaps, now iPod, any musical device you can carry, or any portable item whatsoever, they serve the naked imagination itself. Every time we are concentrated on something and the rest of the world quietly disappears... How does it affect our perception of reality? How do we distance ourselves from the transportation to the Other they offer us, and reaccess the repetitive world?

Anytime I board a train, walk a street, venture crossing those awful intersections at Hachiko in Shibuya, or Electric Town Akihabara, I try to delete the crowds surrounding me, yelling at me, pushing me, and concentrate on the still turmoil of all those textures of sounds and images. A constant visual and audible rape. The excess of symbols, people and information in this city is astounding, horrible. The uniformity of all this is obscure and terrifying. The billboards that occupy any sight, the ocean of houses and flashing lights. It's the same images and elements that struck any foreigner coming to Tokyo in the 80s, but still not much seems to be changed. The city does not develop, it masturbates itself on an illusion of harmony and progress that never comes. Nothing happens.











The cacophony of pachinko.

The alimentary pornography of advertisements.

# 桃

美味  
しい

第一弾！

福島県特産品







Tokyo, with its millions of inhabitants, has become a “non-place” (Marc Auge`), the “first society of spectacle”, itself a spectacle, a fetish fetishizing itself. Not only Odaiba, or Makuhari Messe, or an empty department store, but the whole city serves nothing but consumption. It is a total showcase, of things that pass away so rapidly, like fashion, television programs, commodities, food, transient cults and technologies. There is hardly any firm point, and, as noted before, its centre, the Imperial Palace, is nothing but a void. Like Barthes, defoliating Japanese boxes, the content is at the end irrelevant. Buildings fade away in a matter of instants.

Months ago, a building just behind my dormitory was demolished. It all happens so fast, without making any sounds. Probably, this silent demolishing was due to how irrelevant that place was, just like anything else in Tokyo. Before I could realize it, all was flattened in a parking lot.









The void of this completely impersonal parking space now hosts cars, cats, and the echoes of life coming from the surrounding apartment houses. Another non-place, anonymous, selfless."Like money, the spectacle in global capitalism becomes the general equivalent for what the entire society can be and can do." (Cazdyn)

Artistic portrayls of Tokyo go in this direction: a suffocating conglomerate of plastic, concrete, meat and obsessions. (from Tsukamoto Shin`ya`s “Tetsuo”) (from Shozin Fukui`s “Pinocchio 964”) (from Sogo Ishii`s “Electric Dragon 80.000V”)

If we were to isolate all those single sounds, and contemplate their vertiginous complexity... The fixation on a single point which reaches all reality, swallows it as a whole, and nothing else remains intact.

Going back to Daikan Plaza... I first ventured in it searching for a music record shop, JNR/NEDS, specialized in one single music genre, noise.

NEdS (P.A.)

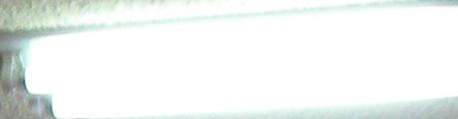
Handwritten note on the left door.

NEdS  
AVANT-GARDE  
IMPORTED  
CD-RECORD-VTR  
SHOP

Small white sticker on the left door.

世界の自然を愛し、街を愛し  
世界の人々と交流する  
★エスベラントツアー★  
GCTフナル

JR  
JR東日本  
緑の国



メジャ-Root  
ジャズ類の  
ブートレグは  
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（縦書き）

# NEds

AVANT-GARDE



IMPORTED  
CD·RECORD·VTR  
SHOP

SINCE 1985

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Sat - Sun 11:00 - 19:30  
(土) (日)  
Sun 11:00 - 19:30  
(日)





2000

THE PLANET

Randy H.X. You

Such a tiny shop, on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, in the middle of nothing, or better, of everything possible, containing such a complex history of sound experimentation.

Invisible to the eye of the passerby, one has to struggle to find it. Its working hours are random. The owner didn't want his picture taken. He only speaks Japanese, and I don't. I fail this research for I am incapable of communicating. Unable to understand, the language meets my mind mostly as a flow of incomprehensible sounds. I look at kanji as signs and wonder what they mean. One has to train himself in order to gain access, understanding. Noise music requires the same training.



It comes violent and disgusting at first. John Cage was first perceived as inaudible. Glenn Branca's symphonies of electric guitars were defined as fascist. In the 70s, Japanese psychedelic band Les Rallizes Denudes shocked the crowds for its blinding light effects, unbearable volumes and anarchistic performances. They soon disappeared. One even joined the Japanese Red Army, hijacked a plane and fled to North Korea.

Les Rallizes Denudes

Haino Keiji & Merzbow

When NEDS`s owner showed me a pile of documents, self produced magazines, drafts of articles and photocopies he had stored, archived, tracing the development of the musical underground of Tokyo and elsewhere, from the 1970s to today, and told me he would let me copy them if I knew Japanese, I felt such a frustration, anger, the partial awareness of the impossibility of going any further with my research: what Debord and Sanguinetti call “the general powerlessness”.

For this, I fail this study, and cannot claim any ethnographicness. If Bestor`s book only had contained one single account of a failure, I probably would have felt better.

Anyway, again Daikan Plaza, its pornographic core, and the noise it contains. That dvd which for me meant a contact with the heterogenous, can also be considered as bearing every sign of the post-productionist society we live in. Noise music shares all of them. It deals with waste, it is grounded on the consideration of humanity as debris, of discards, interchangeable faceless units. It cherishes the ugly, the grotesque, what Bachtin called "the carnivalesque": flows entering and leaving the bodies, unleashed, free and uncontrolled. A temporary freedom, that of the carnival, where authority can be attacked and parodied. That of pornography, to be consumed in suitable intimacies. That of noise music, which repels the majority, which is painful and hard to endure, forging a masochistic contract between the musician and the listener. It is strictly non-narrative. It speaks a language of imperfection and miscommunications.

Power relations are reenacted in noise: the musician as a dictator, the audience willing and waiting to be tortured and exploited, to be hurt. But at the end, it is a mutual loss of identity. Identities merge into each other, melting in the same ecstatic atonement which is reached by absolute sound. A celebration of brutalism and gratuitous violence.

Government Alpha

Incapacitants  
Masonna

NEDS` s owner himself participated as a musician, and built a shop that serves more like an archive, a museum of these acts. It is an ultra-feticization: albums are made in such limited copies, availability is scarce and is anyway not the point. Noise is not unique, it is itself interchangeable, a commodity. The monikers musicians adopt change so quickly it is impossible to follow. Groups mostly serve one single performance, improvising severe monuments of noise. Albums are often home made, packaging is as important as the content itself. Much like that dvd I mentioned so many times, it is not what it contains that counts, but the "little death"(Bataille) it bears.

It is an “in-between”, a vector of significance, and not the significance itself. Walter Benjamin, in “The Work of Art in the Age of Technical Reproduction” described the “loss of aura”, the detachment from ritual that art experiences in the modern age, a profane sacralization of art which, by being reproduced at an infinite pace, by being available to all and indeed disposable, loses its uniqueness and authenticity, its relation to the sacred.

Noise music, by being disposable and made of disposable objects and sounds, plays with this negation, and redefines itself as an idol, a fetish, a moment captured on tape and packed in absurd and contingent disguises.

A self parody, Merzbow issued an album which only comes inside a Mercedes Benz car which once started only plays that record. Up to now, Merzbow released more than 300 albums.

The materials, both acoustic and visual, are raw, often artificially randomly selected, distorted, corrupted to a state of non-understanding and untraceability. As William S. Burroughs with his experiments with cut-ups, creating a non-language by displacing words and fragments, for an altered and different communication, an unrestrained narrative, the same process of alienation of accessibility is followed by noise music.

Paul Hegarty defines it as pure negativity, a reconstruction of the deconstructed. Like places shining of new significance though a psychogeographical reappropriation, sounds and materials boil in new forms and meanings. Noise is nothing but a cultural selection of sounds. Following Adorno, Schoenberg`s dissonances were at the time a symbol of the bourgeois`s failure and decline. The illusion of harmony that controlled forms and shapes of sounds supply is but a frail equilibrium. "What is called music today is all too often only a disguise for the monopoly of power"(Attali). Not only today, but always.

For Marx, music is a mirror of reality. For Nietzsche again, in “The Birth of Tragedy”, noise is the threatening world that is kept in captivity and known through its domestication in ritual. For Hegel, noise is a menace to be manipulated into form. Serving as a code for relations of power, from courts to villages (in which narration, through musical accompaniment, is a specific duty of few figures) it is language itself, a code deciphering reality in its accepted version. Today is much the same: the banality of sounds, the stupidity of lyrics, the limited “song” format itself, designed for an audience incapable of being receptive for more than 3 minutes, all confirms Attali’s statement.

“Music is inscribed between noise and silence, in the space of social codifications”(Attali). It is against this monopoly, against social codifications, that noise acts as an in-between. A suspension. Again, as Burroughs decomposed language and attained a loss of meaning harbinger of new identities, noise interferes with common discourse. It reaches liminality, a transformative capability. Siratori Kenji, writer and noise musician, describes the novel and noise as “cultural triggers”, a “defection”, and Japan as “the cultural discharge zone”









John Savage, in “Industrial Culture Handbook” describes 5 aspects of industrial/noise music:

# 1- Organized autonomy

## 2- Access to information

## 3- Use of synthesizers

## 4- Anti-music

## 5- Shock tactics

(from Aoyama Shinji`s “Eli Eli Lema Sabachthani?”)

A new pedagogy of listening is needed. Possible and multiple readings to be inscribed in the language of things and perception. A Body without Organs resounding of the language of chance. The body itself becomes an hypertext: Masonna`s noise mostly springs from his gestures and acts. The body speaks a language not only visually decipherable, but also audible, and ear-piercing.

Debord suggested the concept of “intermedia”, and noise music makes full use of this. Material is potentially the universal. The body a machine, the machines as our bodies. “Person-to-person communication described in the language of things”(Varese).

“An acoustician, a cybernetician, he (the musician) is transcended by his own tools...instruments no longer serve to produce the desired sound forms, conceived in thought before written down, but to monitor unexpected forms. Bach recreated the organ to fit his music; the modern composer, on the other hand, is now rarely anything more than a spectator of the music created by his computer. He is subjected to its failings, the supervisor of an uncontrolled development. Music escapes from musicians... He becomes the organizer of a fluid work: quasi alive, quasi organic, creating its own signification through history.”(Attali)

“Meaningless, music is the source of silence, but also of creative emergence; it rejects the hypothesis of a natural foundation for relations of sound, refuses a natural organization of sensible experience. Form is freed from the constraint of having a single configuration and is founded upon an infinite labyrinth of feedback effects”(Attali)

To describe this labyrinth of feedback, I can find no better title than Incapacitants` “Forest in Noise”

Noise composer Aube (Nakajima Akifumi) in “Blood Brain Barrier” used as the only source of sound an electroencephalogram, which means, the sound of the brain working. Each of his compositions spring from one single source, to heartbeat, a metallic wire, book pages, lamps or water. Sound is so heavily deformed, processed, amplified and multiplied that the result is an annihilating flow of drones.

This raises questions about arbitrariness, about the existence of things independently from our perceptions of them. Where to archive, to store, to categorize all the sounds which pass unnoticed? Do they exist, do they resound from their own being concrete? John Cage made arbitrary compositions by consulting the I-Ching, but arbitrary are not the sounds themselves but the instants we perceive them. When? Under which conditions? Aube's brain waves and heartbeat are perennial echoes of our physical existence, but are perceived only under certain externally imposed conditions.

Heart for example, is perceived only when attacked from the outside, whether by love, fear, disease, emotions, and is acousticed through specific technological devices. Perception itself is in this sense a result of chance and selection.

Glitch music: errors and corruptions are inscribed in the recordings, cds are scratched, in order to create new possibilities from failures.

Field-recordings: landscapes of captured sounds, without any human intervention. I remember listening to a record made of sounds of somebody walking on snow and on ice, slowly sinking and scatching those surfaces. Sounds I had never thought about before, but when reproduced on tape acquire a completely different aura, atmosphere. This raises questions about what can be considered as natural, and what artificial.

In recent film “Eli Eli Lema Sabachtani”, at the death of the character Nakahara (real life noise musician Violent Onsen Geisha, Hair Stylistics), his body is burned in a funeral pyre built on the seashore. The sound of his flesh and wood being consumed by flames, and the drone of the ocean`s waves, are recorded and immortalized on tape by his only friend. The sounds of this wake will be infinite material for further noise compositions. Death itself is made reproducible.

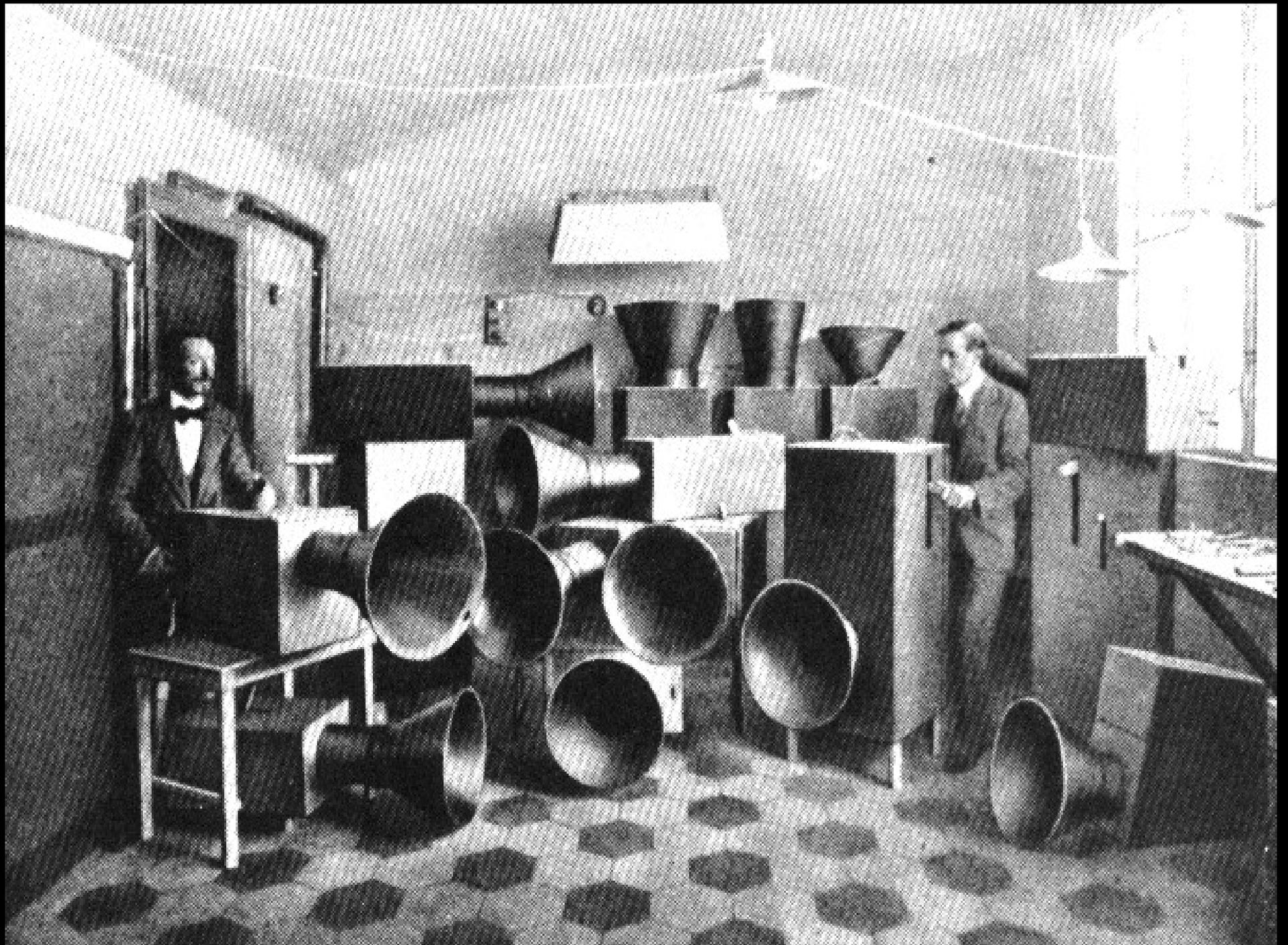
Body again is the sole focus of attention, it is made material and commodity. Again, it is rendered pornographic.

Body speaks a biologically horrible language, but as vector of flows, it is freed from the siege surrounding it, and becomes vector of beauty.

Any elements can become source of beauty and carry infinite potential. “Everything can be used” said Debord, regardless of its origins. The brutal imposition of industrial society was celebrated and ritualized by the Italian artistic movement of the Futurists. They worshipped the naked sounds of words, wrote meaningless poetry, concentrating only on the simulation of the language of things through words; they loved war (we are here in the 1910-20s), saw it as a pure expression of mechanical power, towards the replacement of humans with machines. Armies died and were replaced with others, just as machines can be fixed in short time.

The only projectuality of industrial society was for them its own cult. Nothing but endless progress and despersonalization. Luigi Russolo can be said to be the first noise musician. Through the invention of the “intonarumori” he was able to compose “symphonies” of raw sounds that resembled those of machines, alarms, industries. He then wrote the manifesto “The Art of Noises”(1913), sublimizing this dehumanizing future in cacophonies of controlled noises.





Noise as an excess, it resembles the excess of industrial society, adopting a parody of post-modernist theory to convey a message that is closer to a void, an absence rather than a teaching. Ambiguity and openness are disclosed, a new pedagogy of listening as well as of perceiving.

It is a celebration of the aleatory, of the non-projectuality. It is ostensibly nihilistic, and makes heavy use of blasphemous and obscene imagery. Born from a technocracy, raised in contexts which are mostly urban, such as Tokyo, it speaks its same language, devoid of any sense though.

“Meaninglessness is the only possible meaning in repetition without a project”(Attali)

Apersonality, anonymity, equivalence, boredom. “The subject, freely controlling himself, free of all concern for the empirical world and having become absolute, exposes himself as lacking animation, virtually as dead in the face of the total reification which throws him back entirely on himself and his protest. The dialectical images of surrealism are those of a dialectic of subjective freedom in a state of objective freedom... If today, however, surrealism seems itself to be obsolete, it is because people already deny themselves that consciousness of denial that is contained in the negativity of surrealism”(Adorno)

It is people themselves who decide to be subjugated, to comply to all that the others demand from them. It is mostly a matter of personal choice, especially in a capitalist society like Japan , which can still claim to be one of the major powers in the world. I don`t want to mention the problems undercurreing Japanese society, nor venture in such standardizations like group-model, obedience, obligations and whatsoever.

But the amount of visual, eye and noise pollution in this city implies a voluntary subjugation of the most. Artificial eyes are spread all over the city, watching everything, at all times and all places. The Akihabara killer`s actions were followed, filmed and broadcasted in every single detail. Right wing politics are screamed through loudspeakers, the flow of words just blurs and becomes a drone of undiscernible noise. The city itself is a monstrosity of complex layers of noises, symbols and images. There is hardly any escape from them.

What if we were to isolate every single sound, classify and archive it? People collect photographs and write their memories in diaries, while sounds mostly fade away, and are not considered deserving any attention. Noise music, field recordings, ambient, drone, all of these genres go the opposite direction. They feed on these scattered fragments and find a new beauty in them. Once accumulated, reprocessed, combined and deformed, a sound so absolute and amorpheous is created, that the Dyonisiac is reached.

The desire to recollect all those pieces of sounds and remember them. A sonic flow, which runs through the city, another organ, another body. Once the imposed order and understanding of these sounds is altered, how does perception fall into a crisis, a failure of meaning?

ICC museum in Opera City Hall, Shinjuku, hosts exhibitions of digital and interactive art, and sometimes noise concerts.

Yoshihide Otomo, Christian Marclay, Ikeda Ryoji, and others, have played here, but fruition, the exceptionality of the experience are radically different than when held in regular live houses, and in the miniature NEDS as well. Once entered the museum context, the aura is lost, or differently, the excitement, the instigation, are lost.

I spoke with Udagawa Takeo, art critic (<http://ameblo.jp/fringeculture>), who I met at one of those concerts. We spoke of noise music: “Noise had both meaning. Creation and Destruction. In Tokyo, many old buildings are destroyed, and new things are born. Noise music is the sound of death and rebirth”. What I had personally perceived, the connections between Tokyo`s urbanity and noise, are felt by others.

“Architecture is always the ultimate realisation of a mental and artistic evolution; it is the materialisation of an economic level/status. Architecture is the pinnacle of realisation for all artistic production because architecture signifies the construction of an atmosphere and fixes a way of living”(Asger John)



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The audience at concerts. A decentered musical genre, mostly produced and consumed in the privacy of homes, in solitude in front of a pc or a synthtizer, it is in places like NEDS and live houses where people can meet and exchange opinions. Differently from what I expected, people in concerts are of all ages. From youths, to salaryman still dressed in their suits after work. As both NEDS owner and Udagawa told me, noise music in Japan had 3 eras. Now this could be defined as the third one. First, it was Merzbow, Yuasa Joji, in the 70s. Then the 80s and 90s, with CCCC (Astro), Hijokaidan, Incapacitans, and cultural agitator and noise musician Tano Koji (MSBR) with his magazine Denshi Zatsuon. This era was probably over with his premature death at the age of 44.

Now, it's the third wave, with Government Alpha, Timisoara, and many others. At concerts, I notice the same people attending. As I later discover, a fair part of them are noise musicians themselves, people that have known each other for a long time, have worked together, and are here attending friends' and collaboratos' shows. NEDS's owner is there, filming every performance, archiving it. For nothing ought to be lost.

Audience is quiet, there is very little movement. It is not a music to dance to, there are no lyrics to follow. Many keep their eyes closed, losing themselves in flows of uninterrupted noise. Under all that sonic violence, appeasement is found. Some even fall asleep. I myself, while my body is stirred and aroused by the high frequencies, I cannot think of anything, I cannot focus on a single thought. In “drug-free” Japan (mostly a false rhetoric, and anyway, passing out in your own puke is not that different), ecstasy is found elsewhere, induced by a catastrophe of sounds, a cathartic elegy.

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