17-19 APRIL
MADINAT JUMEIRAH, DUBAI

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Ahoura is the title of a third studio album recorded by Jacob Dzvonkovska and Rafał Kowalski – the artists behind the Industrial Sound Project. The release is a part of their audiovisual project combining three elements in total: sound installations presented in the form of an art exhibit, audiovisual performance and music album. The artists jointly inspired by the industrial landscape of Bułgarzyce in northern Poland, performed during the grand finale of this year's Tehnofest Festival.

This particular project is also linked closely to the latest issue of Contemporary Lyx magazine. Our mission is to collaborate with the most interesting Polish contemporary artists. By forging such partnerships, we want to show that art can be a powerful instrument to ignite a unique object in and of itself. For this reason, every media release comes with a subscription, and we get a free copy of Ahoura. Its the only way to get the album – so be quick to order your subscription.

On this occasion, we sat down with both artists and Piotr Dzvonkovska, a producer, to have a conversation about their sound project.

Photo – © Jacob Dzvonkovska, Rafał Kowalski, Hacienda Brachstedt, artist residency

Photo – © Jacob Dzvonkovska, Rafał Kowalski, Hacienda Brachstedt, artist residency

Anna Erdelyi: How did you come up with this idea? Is *Ahoura* a stand-alone piece or a single component of a larger art series?

Rafał Kowalski: *Ahoura* and I decided to leave Mammoth Ultimatum together, we've released already two well-received studio albums and engaged in a number of art projects overseen by Contemporary Lyx magazine. I'm also a part of a duo called Industrial Sound Project. We released *Control in Bułgarzyce* about a brand-new composition we'd performed during Bułgarzyce's celebrating the industrial stress of the city. Jacob and I are both artists who enjoy working across different media. Every day we create something new, so it was only natural for us to explore and draw fresh inspiration from this particular context.

Jacob Dzvonkovska: *Ahoura* presented to get involved in the project, Rafał and I discussed the industrial legacy of Bułgarzyce. We contacted using the FSO manufacturing complex as a starting point for our project. We wanted to explore the place, the factory workers, the industrial heritage. We wanted to create a concept for a sound installation representing the conversations between factory workers from Bułgarzyce occurred to us when we conducted a preliminary survey of the area. The whole event would continue in our audiovisual performance produced specifically for the space of a factory. The Industrial Revolution has spawned some of the most profound socio-cultural changes in contemporary history. Factories have shaped our cities, our lifestyles, our relationships. Factory workers have – or intended to bring prominence to the human factor of manufacturing.

Piotr Dzvonkovski: *Ahoura* premiered in the CNZ machine factory as part of this year's edition of Tehnofest Festival organized by the Hacienda Cultural Centre in Bułgarzyce. The festivals formula is based on unveiling site-specific art projects designed for the industrial spaces of the production facilities which still operate around the city. It's unprecedented how the festival unfolds "culture" into these historic industrial sites that remain largely inaccessible to ordinary people. First and foremost, the goal of the festival is to bring the local community, the factory workers and their families together, strive to capture the magnetic nature of manufacturing and highlight people's contribution to the production process. Cultural events hosted by factories make us realize that progress and modernization are produced upon the potentially irreconcilable tension mediums and humans. The festival urges its audience to raise questions so that one's humanity wouldn't fall prey to technological development.

Photo Hacienda Brachstedt Entrance – © Hacienda Brachstedt, Industrial Sound Project

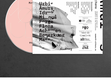

Photo – © Jacob Dzvonkovska, Rafał Kowalski, Hacienda Brachstedt, artist residency

AD: The release is a part of the larger audiovisual project comprising three elements in total: sound installations presented in the form of an art exhibit, audiovisual performance and music album. Could you elaborate on the individual pieces?

JK: There's a certain correlation and interaction between the seemingly separate components, which I'd like to emphasize. Sound installations are inherently linked to the audiovisual performance, which the project's design allows such mobile to fully function on its own accord, with no discernible loss in a multifaceted quality or resonance. We're thrilled that we were able to produce this album, even though the form of a 30-minute vinyl release doesn't quite seem mainstream anymore. Still, we can't help to feel a little bit nostalgic about the form of a tangible music record – it's a type of archive you can always revisit.

RK: I personally conducted the interviews with factory workers from Bułgarzyce. My main objective was to capture the sonic nature of the industrial landscape. Bułgarzyce is home to many industrial facilities situated along the industrial hub in Bułgarzyce. My questions focused on the private lives of the life-long employees, some of whom met their future husbands and wives at work. The factory workers shared their experiences. These stories have gathered formed a captivating, subjective and sometimes touching narrative about one's working and actual life.

Photo – © Jacob Dzvonkovska, Rafał Kowalski, Hacienda Brachstedt, artist residency

AD: Which aspect of audiovisual performance's production do you find most challenging? Are there any potential problems you must overcome?

RK: Several. Off the top of my head, I could name logistics, the need to host your team and continuous technical difficulties. In my opinion, it's always the human factor that stirs things up. As the mentioned before, I had to interview ten different people for the project – the result of such an undertaking is unpredictable. Some people don't like to be in front of the camera, or they don't like initial coverage. What do you do? Do you go back to the factory, redefine and reevaluate, adjust the course according to the discoveries you've just made.

JK: The greatest challenge for me is composing an effective image that would entice the audience to embrace a much more demanding high-brow piece of audiovisual art. We produce sounds that bridge the common understanding between the mainstream and experimental music genres and are usually assembled and organized in music composition. If they sourced separately, and first presented to the audience, the sound installations would function as a standalone piece in the peripheral venue. In other words, they're supposed to "listen" and not just "hear" things. Listening suggests paying attention to sounds; we expect our audience to listen carefully.

Photo – © Jacob Dzvonkovska, Rafał Kowalski, Hacienda Brachstedt, artist residency

AD: Can audiovisual projects be "exhibited" on multiple occasions? Is it possible to recreate the performance or is it always a unique, frequently transient experience?

RK: *Ahoura* is a perfect example of one of those audiovisual projects that are presented in their full glory one time only. However, we could definitely perform the score separately, for instance during a music festival.

JK: Our music is tailored to the demands of a venue it nonetheless changes. The improvised elements are contingent upon, to some extent, a calm volume or acoustics of the production space. We'd gladly play another *Ahoura* in another factory or some reinforced post-industrial space to hear how the sound evolves.

AD: Thank you for the conversation.

For more information about the project, go to www.industrialsoundproject.com

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About The Author

Anna Erdelyi Tóvári

Creative manager, playful, designer, a passionate lifelong learner. Fascinated with many years of experience working in the creative industries. Interested in the digital transformation, in the art and in composed postgraduate studies in communication management. Experienced with various institutions, companies and organizations, no creating events organizing for Contemporary Lyx.

About Artists

Jacob Dzvonkovska

an audiovisual artist, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk and a writer across various mediums, including video, photography, performance and sound art. Jacob, the participant in a number of artistic residency programmes, such as Waterfront Gdańsk, Hacienda Brachstedt, Nowyhorizont, Lithuania, Grenzen Kunstverein Wesseln, Berlin, Norway, NCK Foundation Residency, Kaunas, Lithuania, Tehnofest Festival, Poland. His work has been displayed as part of multiple exhibitions in Poland, Lithuania, Germany and Norway. Jacob is artistic director of Industrial Sound Project, Gdańsk. Co-Editor-in-Chief, Dzienniki Gdańskie Collective. He has been a member of the Polish Association of Contemporary Art in Poland, CIAN Lodz, Poland, Contemporary Lyx Magazine, Poland, Hacienda Brachstedt Art Gallery & Research in Coworking Residency, Bułgarzyce, Poland, Nowyhorizont Artist Residency Berlin, Germany, Wesseln, Germany, Kaunas, Lithuania and Cultural Contemporary Art Museum in Kaunas, Lithuania. Jacob's work can be found at www.dzvonkovska.com.

Rafał Kowalski

Industrial Sound Project, Member of Jazz Bands as HOT, Industrial Dreamers Trio, Lyx Jazz Quartet, Mammoth Ultimatum. Rafał has made performances around the world. For instance as part of the Industrial Sound Project, Rafał has played at the Kaunas Contemporary Art Museum, Lithuania, Lyx Jazz Quartet at the Kaunas Jazz Festival, Lithuania, Jazz Bands at Piano Pub Festival in Denmark, ZTM in Gdańsk, Poland, Jazz Bands at Tehnofest Festival in Bułgarzyce, Poland. Rafał's Drum Recording, the author and co-creator of the Industrial Sound Project, Gdańsk, Poland, Jazz Bands at Tricity Jazz Festival in Gdańsk, Poland. His educational workshops entitled Groundsquawks Percussion Workshop, Rafał has led workshops, in 2016, for students of Jacques Dalcroze Conservatory, Rafał has led workshops in Gdańsk, Poland, Rafał's Drum Recording in the years 2016-2017 for pupils aged 8 gained success, produced and curated the Industrial Sound Project, Bułgarzyce, Poland. For more information on the artist, see www.mammoth-ultimatum.eu.

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