

DO YOU SYMPATHIZE WITH SYNTH? #1 - DO YOU SYMPATHIZE WITH “AMBIENT SYNTH” AND “DREAM POP”?

- 1) Hi, Minimal Music Lovers! One day, I was wading through the fog of the sonic world called *Soundcloud*... Suddenly, I got amazingly bewitched by the soundscape of **Galatée** - the synth-pop symbiosis of **Yana Semour** (lyrics, vocals) and **Dmitry Gruber** (synth). This duo does 80's based music by using analogue sound equipment. Here we go, starting “old school”: What has motivated you to found your band *Galatée*?

Dmitry Gruber: It happened by itself. We had no purpose. One day we've just started recording and named it. There's a feeling that we had no chances to not to do it. There's something that has always been here with us. And one day the time has come. Time to gave it a form.

- 2) When did you have the first contact with music and what has encouraged you to create music in the genre of “dream pop” and “ambient synth”?

Dmitry Gruber: I'm not sure if there's kinda interesting story. My family is absolutely non-musical and I have no special education. When I was a child, I loved to play with a cassette recorder but it's common for children in a way, isn't it?

As for “dream pop” and “ambient synth”, everything turned out somehow by itself. I've just heard it once somewhere and I liked it. I love this kind of music because it corresponds well to my inner world. You know there's a statement that” drum-machines have no soul”. But in my opinion, the sound of all the same guitar teams, countless cover-bands, “bar-rockers” etc. is much more insincere. It's kinda disaster. I'm not proud of listening to music and know almost nothing about genres. In fact, I don't like most of the music - not the old, not the new.



- 3) Definitely. As a fan of minimal synth, I can tell it can sound really organic even if it's made with machines. I suppose you can say where's rhythm, there's life. In fact, it's a matter of taste as always. *Galatée* is a nymphomaniac figure from the Greek mythology. Are you interested in esoteric things?

Yana Semour: I don't know why you called *Galatée* a nymphomaniac. She was just a very beautiful statue, who got married with her creator and bore him children. Dmitry Gruber: To be honest, I don't know such interpretation of *Galatée's* image to. But Yana said about it. And as for the “esoteric things”, well, it shouldn't be talked. Let's just say that I am very good at some specific things.

- 4) Oops... sorry, mistake! Was searching for the adjective of nymph - expression of a lower ranked goddess referring to the Greek mythology. By asking for esoteric, if you're interested in ancient cultural history. So anyway, better going on to the next question after I tried to give your band name a slight touch of a slippery sexual image, 'haha'! Which experiences/situations/emotions inspire you the most to create the dream atmosphere in your songs?

Yana Semour: Incredibly endearing beauty, the magic that can be committed, absolute love to all that's around and the presence of the soul in the items. For us it's all the gates to another world where everything is possible to happen, where all what we thought, think and dream is real. There are the most terrible and thrilling moments, the most striking tracks that I go. Its minutes when there's just me and the world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiM02O3mpyU>

- 5) Poetically expressed. The first thing, which hits my mind are some lines in Goethe's "Faust". I know - main thing - mentioning a high standard literature, 'haha'. The paragraphs when Faust longs to feel alive. He wants to feel - no matter what kind of emotions he will expect. There are emotions with inspire us the most and give us a certain ambition to create.

Dmitry Gruber: I've never wondered about inspiration. I'm sure that it doesn't exist. It's just an excuse for the lazy or for those who maybe shouldn't do what they do. All our songs - they are only the consequences of what happened in reality. Our tools are dreams, wine, memories and endless irony. I cannot exactly say at which point inspiration can appear. We have created or found out our own lyrical world and we broadcast some things out - we gave them the Form! Often I become aware of some emotions after the end of the record. When I leave the state of mystical intoxication, unconsciousness. Sometimes it feels like everything happens in a reverse - like rewinding a tape.

- 6) I like the way you two describing your feelings. To give you a reference of an artist who does "dream pop" with 80's based drum machines and his most songs are flavoured with irony: *John Maus* - "Street Light", "Head for the Country" and "Keep Pushing On". I do love these tracks. Check them out. However, everyone who already checked your *Sound Cloud* profile knows you have uploaded a lot of songs. Please tell us about your enormous creative process and give us a closer look in how you work out songs.

Yana Semour: When every text is a part of a system or universe - it's not as difficult as it seems: to make a text and speak it. And it's very easy when you live there and see everything as it is - not through the glass or tunnel or blue screen. It's really easy to say what you know and what you feel. I always have something to tell you about the places that you don't know. Our collaborative work with Gruber makes me happy. Because he knows what I know and he knows what I want to say. It's amazing and magical when someone feels you so well.

- 7) I admire you for finding such a person. It's simply great to share feelings and transferring them into music. This is where the true magic is! By the way, another music reference: *Nouvelle Phénomène* - "Au Fond De Mon Cœur" and "Cruel Game". These tracks tend to sound a bit like 80's romantic kitsch but in a melancholic cool way.

Dmitry Gruber: Thanks. I will check them for sure. As for our creative process, I can just say: "If you love boogie, you dance boogie every day", 'haha'! But seriously, I don't feel myself like a musician. I see myself as a film- and winemaker. This helps me to ignore a lot of crises and difficulties that all that so-called "musicians" are full of. I really don't like musicians, they think too much on things that need to happen by themselves. I absolutely cannot understand how

someone can record an album for six months or a year. It's a real nonsense – a waste of precious time! I don't have any goals, plans and other illusions about the result. I just know what to do.

And I don't try to interfere myself. We never agreed beforehand with Yana about what exactly will be in the end. We both know how it all should happen, but try not to look into the future ahead of time. Above that, I never write or make any sketches outside the studio. Now there are many different devices that allow us to create and save sketch-record on the run, but we're quite annoyed with this approach. I don't even want to hear about something like that. Recording - it's like a ritual. I've been waiting for nightfall and what's going to happen happens. If everything is prepared correctly, it all goes well.

On the first take... the best take is always the first take. And critical error hasn't occurred. Actually, my studio isn't like a studio. Actually, it's more like something between a bedroom and a cozy bar. There are just a few musical instruments. Honestly, we've changed them frequently. And it's not a 'creative search', it happens because I love to break a gear. If the record is a ritual, there will be a place for a mystery. And I don't want to leave extra tracks. It's something like the unspoken rule.

I have never understood all these musicians who love their instruments so much - it's just a thing. Who needs these funny affections? Incidentally, I remember a story that happened last Christmas. I noticed that my little sister was quite sad. I went up to her and said: "Have you ever smashed a guitar?" She said "no", and I told her: "But do you ever wanted to try?" And she was like : "Of course!". Well, I allowed her to pick any two of my guitars for smashing them. Just to chips. When she crashed the last, I looked into her face - and you know, I had never seen her so happy. Do you know what I mean?



- 8) Yes, I think so. Usually, most people are really attached to things. They can't let go easily. But for my part, I think it's not their fault, it's society's foremost fault. It supports the well-known materialistic attitude. It must have been an entertaining The-Who-Reloaded performance in private surroundings! By the way, please give us an update about what you're going to do next. Do you think of sharing your music with the public by giving a concert? Are there any upcoming tours or club sessions you have announced yet?

Dmitry Gruber: As Jim Morrison sang: "The future's uncertain and the end is always near." We have no any certain plans. We would love to do concerts but we cannot come to an agreement with some organizers. We don't think that it would be appropriate to make any ordinary club concerts or performing at festivals. It wouldn't look like what we want. *Galatée's* concert must be accompanied by a leisurely and plentiful drinking of wine, tables with fine flavoured food, and maybe even with some sincere and drunken chatting in the background. It's rather more a restaurant theme than any nightclub parties. It's difficult to explain. To our regret, we have no concert video because operators got drunk and forgot about their responsibilities every time. It

would be easier to catch “what *Galatée’s* concert is about”. Additionally, it would be nice to find a concert manager. We aren’t really friendly people, so maybe for that reason it doesn't happened.

- 9) Nice concept! Would like to see kind of an arranged promo video some day. That means, if you guys consider, it fits well with your attitude towards publishing music. Last but not least: we, the community of “Flux Webzine”, are very much interested in knowing which synthesizer equipment/drum machines do you use and which settings and effects do you prefer to experiment with?

Dmitry Gruber: You may have noticed that I never post photos or something about music gear. Don't get me wrong, I use a lot of things but I really hate any cults of using something, no matter what to use. Using of something won't make you better and won't make your music better too. Any mentions of products are profitable only for manufacturers and resellers. It's always connected with marketing, commercial and business tricks, but never with music creation. When someone asks me for advice which synthesizer is better to buy, I don't know what to say.

Retro synths is archaic, modern synths are based on 20-years-old technologies (yeah, I know, the experts would like to debate) and just simply worthless; expensive gear is overpriced, low-cost things are crappy. Otherwise, is there something really new and awesome? I hate this modern trends of endless “reissue of classic”, idle talks and lies about “analogue renaissance”. Small-sized toys that called “synthesizers” are awful too. What's better to buy? – A bottle of wine, 'haha'!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qtr3AEoArDw>

To be honest, I have few things that I love about music gear. That may sounds like a commercial but never mind. I'm not a fan of guitar-music, but if I play it, I will use Rickenbacker's guitars. They're great-made ones. If you have a Rickenbacker, you won't have any problems with your sound. And it isn't about having only 6-strings electro guitars. I dislike bass guitars, but I love Rickenbacker's bass, 4003 - is the best bass guitar. Obviously, I give the impression that I dislike synths. That's true in some way. Often, I would like to break them. But there's one that is really good. “Alesis Andromeda A6”. If you can afford to spill the wine drops on this luxury thing, it means, everything is on the right place. So far about synthesizers...

...for the drum machines: I love typical sounds of the 80's, it's not a secret. I can't say that something tops everything. All famous classic drum machines from the 80's are perfect. My favourite effect is reverberation. Everybody knows that everything sounds so much better with “reverb”. Additionally, I must say something about compression. Let me think... What is the most powerful force in the universe? Love? No! Compression. Be careful with it, 'haha'.

Thank you, guys, for this interview especially for joining in to make it amusing! 'wink' It was really nice to get to know a passionate couple like you! Wish you two all the best for creating more music and for your profession as a winemaker as well. Cheers to your future!

<https://soundcloud.com/hjordisbrittastrom/galatee-la-violence-damour-single-2015>

Author: Anita Neukirch

Website: <http://fluxproject.altervista.org/galatee-interview>