

## INTERVIEW TO AU+

Today we have the chance to talk with **AU+**, an Italian experimental music duo based in Milan, whose latest release, **From Mars to NY**, was released under **Frequenza records**. **Fabio Volpi** and **Rosarita Crisafi** talk about the key concepts behind their music and their crossover approach. Let's let them talk.

- 1) Hi guys. First of all, let's talk about who AU+ are and about what this monicker mean. You're two persons with two different backgrounds.

Making music mixing different styles and modalities is a practice that obviously have always existed, but, more rarely, a new "sound", something more, an extra value, is created, beginning from a whole of experiences and heterogeneous sonority. For this reason, we have introduced relations to alchemy (Au is the gold name in the table of the elements), our goal is to create something new, precious, unexpected, from the fusion of different elements, from the raw matter.

- 2) Some days ago, your new lp has been released, **From Mars to NY**. How can you explain the album? Why have you chosen Mars and New York? Without doubts, this is an experimental work which features interesting collaborations.

I assure you that gathering a huge experienced and versatile jazz musician, **Bruno Marini (Mars)** and a very talented dj and producer as **Nihil Young (NY)** into a rehearsal venue is a proper interplanetary journey.

- 3) One of the distinctive elements of this release is the recover of *turntablism*, a practice strictly related to the Hip Hop world, as well as the presence of the winds. How this idea has born?

The things you're talking about, before they were born as a musical idea, have begun as a need to link personalities with clear and strong identities. Only afterwards, these things corresponded to a sonic earn. We were all interested in crossing our respective musical visions with other points of view.

- 4) I've seen you two times on stage in Milan, the first of which was within the *Minimal Milan* party, which has definitely been a breathe of fresh air. Although you're not categorizable within a specific style, do you feel linked, in a certain sense, to the acts who have shared the stage with you that night?

We feel ourselves as part of many musical genres, mine is more oriented on *darkwave* and *industrial*, that of Rosarita on *jazz* and on *electronic music* in its various forms, although our listenings obviously go beyond these styles.

- 5) How much the so called physical music, produced by the winds, influences digital music and vice versa? In your last work there's a neverending dialogue between this two parts. How much has the first one to offer to the second one?

With this question you've got the point, i think that nowadays the boundary between these two worlds is not so well defined as it was in the past, rather, there's a wide area in which they superimpose themselves. There are *digital apps* which clearly reproduce *modular 70's synths* and "*analogic*" bands who play metronomically miming *sequencers*. In our case, the presence of the winds moves free, suspended above bassline textures and synthesized drones, but the rule has slow life and breaks up, for example, in a song as "*Wild nights*". We get tired soon of our internal arrangements, together with definitions genres!

- 6) Fabio, thinking about your experience with **Otolab**, a collective based in Milan dedicated to exploration within *new media arts*, i ask you what are the points of intersection between musical and artistic experimental research. Could you explain me any practical examples of some of your emblematic works of this kind?

Within Otolab, everything is put in a continuum, seamless. For example, in the performance "*Bleeding*", we make use of audiovisual samples instead of simple audio "*samples*". This practice allow, in some parts, to obtain an acoustic and retinal bombing, hard to obtain with other means, at least with the same synchronic level.

- 7) Rosarita, among the other things, you're expert in *jazz music*. Is there, actually, some kind of incursion from electronic music into this genre? If so, could you name me any example?

*Jazz* music is born as contamination music. Although its linkage with the tradition, a space for the experimentation of new sonorities has always existed. Since the sixties, loads of jazz musicians have let themselves being fascinated by synthetic sounds, there are loads of examples, i can't omit names as **Miles Davis**, **Herbie Hancock**, **Sun Ra** or the **Soft Machine** experiences and the **Canterbury scene**. At the same time, *jazz* catalogue have widely been used by *DJ* extracting *samples*. All of us, thanks to **US3**, have in our ears the riff of *Watermelon Man*! Personally, i'm a lover of the northern sound and, in particular, of the norwegian jazz scene that refers to the **Punk Festival**, in my opinion this is the place from which the most interesting contaminations between *jazz* and *electronic music* come from, the concept of the manifestation itself deletes any sort of separation between the two different music genres.

- 8) What's the artistic/musical situation there in Milan and, in general, in Italy? Is Italy a country in which your "idea" is understood and sufficiently well-supported?

Personally i think that talking about an italian or Milan scene haven't any sense anymore, in particular in a moment in which your music is released online, i don't care if i could be understood or not, i care much about having something to say, if possible. As far as the "medium" concern, the fact itself that you have demonstrated interest and great skill compared to the understanding of what we do makes us confident!

- 9) I've thought about your latest lp as a work strongly influenced by the cinema. What are your preferred directors and do you love, in particular, any soundtrack composer?

These songs goal is to evocate visions. Personally, i think that there are two characters which stand above all: **Kubrick** and **Tarkovskij**. Rosarita thinks the same for **Wim Wenders** and **David Cronenberg**. We're much fascinated by italian *soundtrack* composers such as **Piero Umiliani** and **Piero Piccioni**.

- 10) After having seen you on stage, but on the album too, i've noticed that your music incorporates literature references, a taste for theatre inspired *spoken word* and the use of various types of musical influences, as in your last *release*. Do you think that this river of expressive codes could succeed in reaching its destination and in stimulating the listener's curiosity? Is possible still today to talk about *Gesamkunstwerk*?

From **Wagner** to **Bjork**, the list of artists who have tried to create a multimedia and multisensorial art which was expressible like a unique expressive flux is neverending. Us, much more prosaically, have felt the need to use the *spoken word* like an additional tool to use. Once in the phase of "what to say?", we liked the idea of using the very beautiful and incisive Emily Dickinson's words as if they were fragments (which are royal free) as if her disturbed signal was coming from another dimension.

11) Thanks for your time, greet the readers and invite them to buy your new lp!

Hi and thanks to whoever would look around and, maybe, hear our work!