

FLUX INTERVIEWS: CUT HANDS

William Bennett is one of the pioneers of industrial substance, the most extreme and uncompromising, active since 1980 as **Whitehouse**, the most experimental and, at the same time, the most disturbing one of the panorama of those years (and that had taught and that keep on doing it). The genre created to express his music is *power electronics*, of which he's the father. We have succeeded to talk with him about his project **Cut Hands** in occasion of the release of his new album **Festival of the dead**. Let's talk about it, then, directly with him.

- 1) Let's talk a bit about the genesis of your Cut Hands project. When did you have become passionate with afro/tribal sounds?

It was after discovering real voodoo musicians and what kinds of levels of intensity and complexity could be achieved through that, and also without the assistance of any modern technology. There's a tendency to call anything with hand percussion as "tribal", but it's not. It's also not something i'm interested in deconstructing beyond that intent, it's not even achievable even if you wanted to, many serious music academics already failed!

- 2) What are Cut Hands album covers referring to, especially referring to your new album one? Who does them?

They are originals done by New England artist Mimsy DeBlois, they contain all kinds of mystical references relevant to the music, however it's not something that's easily explainable in a few words. Hopefully people can feel it anyway.

- 3) Could your last album (and Cut Hands albums) be considered a sort of prosecution of the music you have made with your main project, Whitehouse? If so, in which way?

I think it's been a fairly natural and seamless progression, yes. The crossover period was quite long. The main difference is the now lack of vocals although I've been considering introducing some element of vocals, not by myself though I hasten to add.

- 4) Thinking backwards for a moment, what have changed, if you consider yourself, in a general way, an industrial artist, in industrial music since its beginning? Tell me your personal point of view.

I honestly find it difficult to look back and chart things retrospectively and make any sense of it, I find it's too easy for things to get too predetermined otherwise. It all seems like such a long time ago now.

- 5) If someone would ask you about this, how could you define "Afro noise" concept?

There is no concept as such. Actually, Cut Hands began as a DJ project (as in "DJ Cut Hands") and evolved from when I made a experimental underground mix called "Afro noise", it was exactly that, mixing Haitian and African percussion with various noise things I was working on at the time. The mix became really popular and that encouraged me to make my own original music from there.

- 6) How do you consider actual noise / power electronics and powernoise scenes? Is there some kind of relation between the first one (noise music / power electronics) and Ant zen / HANDS releases?

It's not for me really to comment on genre distinctions. Or at least these distinctions and terms didn't exist when the music started being made. And then suddenly i'm not sure exactly when, "noise" became this incredible conformist tight definition.

- 7) Recently, a really well-made book about industrial music has been written by Alexander Reed (Assimilate: a cultural history of Industrial music). There is some talking about the relation between industrial music and visual / performance arts. If there's, what's, as an artist, your relationship with arts in general? Have you ever made pieces of art of any kind related to Whitehouse / Cut Hands? Tell me your point of view about this relation (and eventually yours).

I haven't read or heard about the book so can't really meaningfully comment on that.

- 8) You have been a great provocateur for all your musical career. Is industrial music provoking anymore? What are the weapons available to artists / musicians nowadays? Is noise music a weapon on its own?

Thing is, and people sometimes find this hard to believe, it's never been about provocation. That's not to say that can't be the end result, but that's true about a lot of things. It's always been more of a means of uninhibited personal expression into things i happen to be learning about. So the notion of the availability of "weapons" isn't relevant in that sense.

- 9) What are your current and/or future projects?

Just staying alive is the number one project! Musically, i'm doing remixes and production mostly.

- 10) Are you planning to play some gigs in Italy to support your last release? Do you enjoy live dimension? How people respond to your music?

I'm pretty sure there are some shows in Italy coming up early in 2015 last time i checked the calendar. I always very much look forward to coming there, I really love people's relationship with music and art there, I love it.

- 11) I thank your for your time and availability. Greet FLUX readers and invite them to buy your last album.

Thank you too, always a pleasure.