

INTERVIEW TO VÓLKOVA

Today we talk with one of the most talked minimal synth acts, argentines **Vólkova!** **César Canali** and **Paula Lazzarino** have developed, since their beginning, a particular formula in which, moving from an obscure sort of synth pop to slower and ritualistic minimal landscapes, they've succeeded in creating original music that distinguishes themselves from loads of other artists. Due to this originality, **Dirk Ivens**, with his label **Daft Records**, has become interested into this project and shortly is going to release a compilation named **Sangre**, containing their early works. Let's talk with them.

- 1) Hi César, hi Paula! Talk to our readers about the genesis of your project! I've heard your name for the first time when Xiu booked you for a gig in Milan, and now, after some time, it seems to me that you've grown a lot! Daft Records is promoting your music too.

César - Yes, Daft records was a nice surprise for us, since we started we have been changing a lot, i can't easily compare our first three albums, each of them has something different and special. Now "Sangre" it's a full panorama of our music, with two new tracks in a complete new direction.

- 2) From what i could hear, Vólkova music talks to what's inside of us, i feel your music as music for the inner self that express something that is felt but not seen. In this way, i find it spiritual in some way. What's your music about?

Paula - I'm glad you see our music that way, cause I think It's really about that, about feeling and moods that we can't explain in words. Things that happened that sometimes don't even have a mental explanation cause they're from very deep inside o maybe contradictory, like a battle between the soul and the mind. I think in fact this is the only way we have to express our pure spirit.

- 3) Year after year, you've changed a bit your direction. It seems to me that in the beginning you were more synth-pop driven, while now you're more ritualistic and your sound is more "spiritual" and minimal. Do you agree with this?

César - We agree, when we started to create "Confusion is a good weapon " we looked for a concrete goal, something direct and effective without neglecting experimentation. And that's what we did. Some time later, Trauma and dreams went far deeper. No Geography Solution is a good example. The central piano used throughout the album was a natural resource and proved to be the mainstay of the album . Silent howl is something special, Howl has a particular rhythm that cannot be framed in any genre.

Paula - Yes, I agree, I think connecting deep with people takes a lot of time. When we began to make music together we didn't know very well each other. Now I feel making every song is more like a ritual itself, sometimes it's not really pleasant. but finally, when the song is ready, something of us is healed.

- 4) What's the message behind "Confusion is a good weapon"? What do you want to express? And with "Trauma and dreams"?

César - I remember during the composition of the album, news were bombing about the armed conflict in Syria, I've read many times how the USA supported "rebels" against a democratic regime. For decades it has become all too strange in matters of foreign policy. It was and is very difficult to know what happens. All this became a mass of information null and incomprehensible. I've reached the point of believing that this confusion was the key to total disorientation. If you do not understand, we can not even say or form an opinion and less acted upon. In the end all this became a very powerful weapon.

Paula - The message behind "Trauma and dreams" is more personal, it was a big time of real trauma and dreams for both in different ways.

- 5) What are your musical influences, and is your music influenced by literature, theater and movies in some way? When i listen to your music, i find it theatrical in a particular way.

César - After reading and rereading Jean Baudrillard, it is very difficult to express something in a particular way. And those thoughts naturally infiltrate into music, elements of illusion, simulacrum or hyperreality and reality. Writers and architects are the great masters, we constantly learn from them. As well as some songs do not have a thread specific driver or have large breaks, no doubt that's the influence of cinema in our compositions.

Paula - I see every song as a film itself, so I find interesting when you hear a song and images come to you naturally.

- 6) Besides Vólkova, César is known for his activity with Tacuara Records, a really interesting label that is releasing some really interesting stuff: i think, for example, at the White christian male album, which i consider one of the best of the current year. How things started with Tacuara and what are your plans for the future of the label?

César - Tacuara Records started in Argentina in 2009, due to the lack of interest in my country, i orient all the material to foreign audiences. I learned over the years, there is not a manual for this and nobody taught me anything. I remember the first release was a compilation I did after meeting Peruvian electronic music scene. It was a very successful compilation, combining European artists with South American artists. The idea was to create a link between South America and Europe and it was achieved. Time came after other releases, with the cooperation of labels from Germany and Sweden. Since 2013 Argentina's economic situation was unsustainable. So today I live in Berlin.

White Christian Male was an unexpected discovery, a great album. For the near future, in a few days I will be announcing the pre-order second volume of Not So Cold "A Warm Wave Compilation", 14 artists who composed songs especially for the album. I would like to produce and edit many artists, unfortunately due to economic reasons I have to choose my future plans very well. The Scene is small and not all people have the money to buy records.

- 7) After more than a decade characterized by the electro formula intended as the superimposition of musical layers with the goal to create a really complex music, now electro is going back to its minimalist roots, and a bunch of bands are going back to a minimal approach, the same approach that in 1990 has been talked about by Dirk Ivens. It's not strange that Daft Records and Sleepless Records are promoting acts like yours or Pure Ground. Is this merely a coincidence, or does a bridge exist between what has been made in the early 1990s and what is made now by your project, as an example?

César - Well, it's a complex question. But perhaps the answer is the simplest, I think Daft Records (Dirk Ivens) or Sleepless Records see some potential in certain bands without looking much in the musical context of the moment. It would be a good question for you to do to them.

For my part, I see a growing wave of bands, playing throughout Europe, releasing albums and that's very good, but otherwise I am concerned that many of these bands sound very similar. That makes me think that only a few will be remembered. Does it make sense to have 15 bands sounding like Lebanon Hanover? I do not think so.

- 8) Recently you've moved to Berlin. What are the differences between the Argentine electronic music scene and the Germany one? Do you think that Germany could be a good place where to take your projects to the next level?

César - The most important difference is that there is no electronic music scene in Argentina. Maybe you can find good musicians in isolated projects, but Argentina is not what it was in the 80s. Well Germany is not the paradise, but certainly there are more opportunities to develop an artistic project without many interferences and being close to so many countries, it's great, so many different cultures, I think that's the best thing.

Paula - I don't really stop to think about Argentine or German scene. I think we're here, I mean in Europe, cause some people seems to like the music we make, so this is the place we have to be to play alive, which is the thing that we more enjoy in the world.

- 9) How do you live the live dimension? Do you prefer working in the studio or playing concerts?

César - Concerts are the result of spending hours in a recording studio. Undoubtedly, the songwriting process is something very personal that brings many satisfactions when things go well. Stay in touch and share songs live with the public is totally different, the songs come alive, thanks to those who appreciate them.

Our shows are very intense, all that repressed energy that songs have inside is expelled live and directly, sometimes even in a violent way.

Paula - As I said before, I prefer playing concerts, I mean at that moment César and Paula are really there. But for us that's just possible working at the studio first, which sometimes, as César said, it brings satisfactions and sometimes is very dramatic.

10) Where are you heading to? Where your music is actually going? What do we have to expect from Vólkova in the near future?

César- We are recording a complete new album, maybe for the beginning of 2016. You can expect the best Vólkova album without any doubt. We have in mind most of the next album, it will have elements of all previous albums, the idea is to lump them and go further.

11) Thanks for your time. Greet our readers and invite them to buy your new album, Sangre!

Thank you, and yes, it's always a good help to buy our albums or just to buy the albums of good artists, cause they deserve it. It's not about money, it is to give recognition and support.