

netBloc vol. 5:

The threat at

Goliath's feet...

An infrastructure for take-over

In the world of net audio, much is going on. New netlabels pop up every day. [ccMixer's](#) contests draw more and more remixers into their fray. Jamendo continually boasts new CC'd albums. New netlabels/releases are frequently being added to [Internet Archive](#). I think that it's safe to say that every day new listeners are being introduced to net audio. It's also safe to say, that if these new listeners hear just a couple net audio gems that they connect to, they're more-likely to overcome their first inclination to think that free equals uninteresting, unprofessional or simply bad. Once a listener realizes that net audio is as good or better than mainstream music, they're in. They're part of the movement. They begin to explore the net audio world. The more you explore and listen to net audio, the less you're influenced by the mainstream music-industry. Wouldn't it be great if it were easier for these new listeners to find GREAT new net audio? What can be done to make it easier to dig through the immense numbers of net audio releases?

An infrastructure is clearly needed. A centralized charting system is needed, much like last.fm. In fact, last.fm could be used, but the numbers of mainstream listens still far outweigh net audio listens and as such, net audio releases never get charted in the site-wide charts. A net audio charting system would not be primarily to keep track of sales, it would be to track popularity and to make it easier to find great net audio music.

A greater number of dependable online 'press' coverage of net audio releases is also needed. Sites like "[Black Sweater](#), [White Cat](#)", "[Free Albums Galore](#)", "[ccNela's](#)" and "[Remixtures](#)" all set the bar high with their excellent coverage. We need a

larger network of sites like theirs to help net artists/labels gain new listeners.

Along with written coverage provided by bloggers, a network of internet broadcasters who only broadcast copyleft/CC licensed is also needed. I envision a site much in the same vein as Live365. Broadcasters/netcasters/bloggers could pool their resources/audiences to publicize and market such an endeavor.

Such an infrastructure will also need it's taste-makers. Join us existing taste-makers and spread the word. Burn compilation CDs for your friends. Get others hooked. Free music is enticing if the music is top notch. Just as we at blocSonic do, compile your favorite net audio tracks into compilations with art and liner notes. Launch a site to help promote your favorite net audio.

Lastly, as I mentioned in a previous [blocSonic blog post](#), netlabels need to make their sites USER-FRIENDLY. Experimental navigation is all well-and-good, but that won't gain you new listeners. Why else would you run a netlabel but to provide net artists with a means to gain new listeners? Some netlabels I've been to are unbearable to navigate - hidden links, image rollovers, clever names for links to the release page. All that stuff is so 1997. I'm a web developer and I have no patience to try and decode their navigation systems, why should a casual listener who just wants to check out their music? There are a couple netlabels that I have not explored due to their "experimental" site structure/design. If you call yourself a "netlabel" than please make your music the star attraction. Make it as easy as possible to find it. When it comes down to it, people aren't visiting your site to see your clever use of flash, rollovers

or whatever. They're visiting your site for the music, help them find it. Don't confuse what I'm saying... you can be very creative with the design of your website and still keep it usable and user-friendly. Usability needs to be the highest priority.

There's still a long way to go. Many more net audio listeners are needed in order to impact the music-industry in a significant way. But with an infrastructure for take-over in place, the net audio world can become an influential part of pop-culture world-wide.

Peace

Mike Gregoire

Owner / Creator blocSonic.com

01

Garmisch Partenkirchen - Black Paint

(from the Go, Jukebox! release 'Black Paint' G0006)

(2:46)



**GARMISCH PARTENKIRCHEN
/BLACK PAINT EP**

Written by: Patrik Svensson

Produced by: GPK

Performed by: GPK

Recorded at: Home

Year: 2006

Release URL: <http://www.gojukebox.net/download.htm>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.myspace.com/garmischpartenkirchen>

<http://www.gojukebox.net/artists.htm>

Netlabel: Go, Jukebox!

Label URL: <http://www.gojukebox.net>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/deed.en>

Black Paint

Black Paint features a perfect melding of electronica with a pop/rock aesthetic, a roomy guitar sound that reminds me of Steve Jones' 80s solo sound and vocals that are both haunting and enticing. Add to these elements an addictive catchiness and you have the perfect opener for netBloc volume 5.

Garmisch Partenkirchen

GPK is one of those things that just seems to happen when you try to convert feverish dreams into something quite beautiful but since you don't really remember exactly how the dream started or what it sounded like or who was in it you stumble and falter and end up with something resembling the aspirin more than the fever. GPK is an electronica-act suffering from a power shortage. They like their music as they like their food. They're a trick of the mind, even though they never mean to confuse anyone other than themselves. GPK is an everlasting conflict between five people who are deeply scared of conflicts. They live in Malmö, Sweden. GPK are nice people. Don't hold it against them.

02

STEEP - Let Me Go

(from the independent release 'Your Reality')

(2:07)

STEEP

BELIEVE WHAT YOU SEE, 'CAUSE IT MIGHT BE

YOUR REALITY



Written by: Alex Behrens

Produced by: Alex Behrens

Performed by:

Alex Behrens: Vocals, Guitar

Sven Kroeber: Guitar

Jan Reiser: Bass, Backing vocals

Benedikt Blaskovic: Drums

Recorded at: STEEP Studios, Hausham, Germany

Year: 2007

Release URL: <http://www.jamendo.com/en/album/5283/>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.myspace.com/steep4>

<http://www.steep-music.de/>

<http://www.jamendo.com/en/artist/steep/>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

Let Me Go

Right from the get go, this track grabs you with it's opening guitar audio channel gymnastics and then it pulls you in when the rest of the band kick in. Let Me Go, is a high-energy romp with vocals that shine with that neo-80s sound. A song so catchy, you probably won't be able to...ahem... Let It Go.

STEEP

With impulsive guitars and catchy melodies, STEEP create stirring indie rock. Inspired by British and German indie bands, they create music that follows you everywhere – quiet and loud, with deliberate groove and amazingly catchy tunes.

03

Normaa - International Calling

(from the Jahtari release 'International Calling / Give Thanks To Be Part' JTR_NET1.1)

(3:09)

N
normaa

side A

NORMAA
“International calling”



JTR NET 11
MP3, 192kBps, STEREO

Written by: Eduardo Acosta

Produced by: Eduardo & Raul Acosta

Performed by: Eduardo & Raul Acosta

Recorded at: Void Studio, Gijón, Spain

Year: 2007

Release URL: <http://www.jahtari.org/music/JTR%20NET1.1.htm>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.normablock.com>

<http://www.myspace.com/normaablock>

Netlabel: Jahtari

Label URLs:

<http://www.jahtari.org>

<http://www.myspace.com/jahtari>

Label contact: disrupt@jahtari.org

License:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/de/>

International Calling

With Volume 5, I was hoping to revisit the dub-tastic netlabel Jahtari and include a nice dub jam in the line-up. It didn't take me long to find this gem. A bass-heavy groove carries this along. On top lies a healthy helping of synth melody. This one proves once again that dub/reggae is bursting with life online and Jahtari is setting the quality standard.

Normaa

Normaa are from Gijón, Asturias, in the north of Spain. During the middle of the nineties Eduardo started to explore Hip Hop, composing and producing lots of tunes under the name of Logic, always searching for the emotional side of the rhythm, deeply inspired by Marseille hip hop (N.A.P., Oxmo Puccino, etc.) and the New York Scene (like Group Home, Ghetto Child).

Around 2000 he and his brother Raúl started to explore digital audio and video experimentation. At the same time Dub came into their works, mixing electronic experimentation with dub exploration, motion graphics and experimental videos.

They performed at various events, like Visionica 2004 and '06, Explora 2005, the Optica Festival and this year's Sonar Festival.

Jahtari

After a few years of experimenting around with the most different equipment and styles (from Gabba over Digital Hardcore to Electronica) I finally came to love Dub and Reggae

with all my heart. Thanks to Christoph mostly. From the lack of money and other possibilities came the idea of doing Dub myself with just the tool at hand - a cheap laptop.

The first attempts on tracks in this vein were released in May 2004 on the highly recommended PHONOCAKE netlabel as the 'A Fistful Of Dub'-EP. This release turned out to become a small surprise hit which gave enough motivation for us to pursue the whole thing further on and eventually start our own JAHTARI label in Nov 2004.

Since then JAHTARI and the concept behind it virtually exploded in many ways. First of all a supernice network of fellow musicians from all over the globe who produce their music in a kind of similar approach started to develop and is rapidly extending still. Lots of great and - in a way - even new stuff came from that.

Our bunch of releases in the funny NET-7" format or on NET-EPs, of which I supplied a few, found a huge number of people who to seem like our sound and approach a lot. At least the crazy download numbers and the feedback we get hint to that. A wave of gigs (pics and reports [HERE](#)) and even a surprising amount of media interest followed. Let's hope all this paves the way for some 'real' releases on vinyl soon.

Apart from producing a lot of music I'm running this site and already did a bunch of our covers.

04

Lucrecia - Counting Backwards

(from the Series Media release 'Like Being Home' SERN20)

(4:34)

Lucrecia

LIKE BEING HOME E.P.

- 01 Let's Pretend
- 02 Like Being Home
- 03 COUNTING Backwards
- 04 CHANGING the weather
- 05 MillONES

Producido, grabado y mezclado
por Lucrecia, 2007

SERN 20



Written, produced and performed by: **Lucrecia**

Recorded at: **Lucrecia's home studio in Pereira, Colombia**

Year: **2007**

Release URL: http://seriesmedia.org/eng/content/musica_web/sern/sern20.html

Artist URLs:

<http://www.thesoundoflucrecia.com/>

<http://www.myspace.com/thesoundoflucrecia>

Netlabel: **Series Media**

Label URL: <http://seriesmedia.org/>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/>

Series Media

SERIES is a media project that periodically issue unpublished latin-american musical works. Created in 2004 in Medellín Colombia, SERIES media began convoking artists in Latin America, to receive material for later productions of physical and online records. SERIES also compiles musical works of several independent projects to subsequently distribute them. The project SERIES arises like a possible solution to an existent restlessness among the Latin American electronic musicians trying to outline the topic of culture as a solid pillar to whoever is interested in the electronic arts.

Counting Backwards

A soft understated track that hooks you from the first time you hear it. Lucrecia's sweet vocal style serves the music well. The melodies are simple yet they gain complexity through their interaction with each other. A wonderful example of using synths in a way that play down the "digital" and come off sounding natural and organic.

Lucrecia

Born in Colombia 1980. Began her music project in Medellín, Colombia in 2003. Acerca, her first full length album was released under the colombian label Series in 2005, and was re-edited and re-released in 2007 by the mexican label Mil Records with some new tracks and new versions of the songs. Like being Home is her first EP released under the netlabel section of Series, in which she works using more acoustic sounds, recording sounds of everyday life objects and with a better vocal exploration, all mixed with the characteristic sound of her previous works: Soft voices and beautiful melodies.

05

Rob Hunter - Four

(from the 12rec. release 'Rob Hunter EP' 12rec038)

(4:04)



rob hunter Ep

Written, produced and performed by: **Rob Hunter**

Recorded at: **Rob's bedroom**

Year: **2007**

Release URL: http://12rec.net/Release_Rob-Hunter_038.htm

Artist URLs:

<http://www.myspace.com/robssongsandmusic>

Netlabel: **12rec.**

Label URL: <http://12rec.net/>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/>

Four

This one seemed a perfect fit to follow Lucrecia's track.

A very similar organic quality to this one, yet not at all the same production style. A wonderful fusion between a traditional pop song and glitch pop aesthetics. Rob takes what prefuse73 does to the next level and organizes the glitchiness (is that a word?) into a more traditional song structure and carefully places cut up vocals to form the lyrics. What you end up with a completely modern digitally created pop song that also feels wonderfully organic.

Rob Hunter

Rob Hunter is a young fellow from the city of Bristol in South West England. He studies illustration (he did the artwork) and spends his time putting together tiny animation videos and making music. "I use whatever instruments i can get to make a sound, and layer it all up", as his myspace account tells us. He released a cassette at UK Tapeclub Records before he joined the 12rec. family in late 2006. Say hello to Rob!

12rec.

12rec. is a German based netlabel that has been releasing music as Creative Common licensed MP3's and as handcrafted CD-R's for just over two years now. Their releases span a wide range of styles that include, but are not limited to, post-rock, electronica (in the broadest sense), rap, instrumental and electronic hip-hop, pop (in its seemingly infinite variations), and even folk. There is a strong leaning towards music that is, in general, both poignant and experimental.

06

Misery - Sara

(from the independent release 'Misery')

(4:19)



miserly

Written by: **Joaquin Soler Cardona**

Produced by: **Joaquin Soler Cardona**

Performed by:

Hanan: Vocals

Carlos Barba: Bass guitar

Joaquin Soler: Guitars and programming

Recorded at: **Sant Cugat del Vallés, Barcelona, Spain**

Year: **2007**

Release URL: <http://www.jamendo.com/en/album/4761/>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.jamendo.com/en/artist/misery/>

<http://www.myspace.com/hananmisery>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

Sara

A terrific rock track with a wonderful vocalist. One of many from their release that I enjoyed immensely. In the end, 'Sara' is the one that fit the best in the context of the other selected tracks. Hanan's accent is so lovely and adds a quality to the song in itself. Add to that the driving rhythm and Joaquin Soler's excellent guitar and this is bound to become a favorite of yours.

Misery

Misery is a rock band that was founded in November, 2004 with the intention of representing the "sadness" of life through the work.

The CD "Misery" contains 10 original tracks. It's the result of two years' work and emphasizes the expressiveness of Hanan's voice.

"We want to make honest and sincere music. We work for this. It's our dream.

The CD was recorded entirely in Sant Cugat del Vallés, Barcelona, Spain from September to December, 2006.

We're currently composing new lyrics."

07

David Bowman - Verfolger

(from the independent release 'Verfolger')

(2:27)

DAVID BOWMAN

verfolger



Written, produced and performed by: André Rauhofer

Recorded at: Westwood Homerecording

Year: 2006

Release URL: <http://www.jamendo.com/en/album/2883/>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.davidbowman.de/>

<http://www.jamendo.com/en/artist/davidbowman/>

<http://www.myspace.com/bowmansjourney>

<http://davidbowman.myownmusic.de/>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/de/>

Verfolger

What a terrific rock song! I don't care if I don't understand German. From the opening Piano motif to the synths and everything in between, this is terrific song-writing. The fact that André does it all himself is even more testament to his skill.

DavidBowman

"DavidBowman" is a "singer/songwriter meets electro and indie-pop" project from Hessen, Germany. To avoid misunderstanding (I've been asked many times)... David Bowman has nothing to do with David Bowie. It's the astronaut from Kubrick's popular artmovie "2001 - A space odyssey". And unfortunately there's only one member left of the crew now, who's never been a fan of David Bowie, although there's a lot of respect for him as an artist. The ship is steered by André Rauhofer (Guitar, Piano, Programming, Vocals, Production) since 1999.

08

Mike Link & Harvey Taylor - Night Song

(from the independent release 'Crossing the Bridge')

(4:04)

Crossing The Bridge

A painting of a bridge over water. The bridge has a large, arched, yellow-orange structure. The water is blue and white with a small boat in the foreground. The sky is blue with white clouds and a rainbow in the background.

Mike Link ~ Harvey Taylor

Written by: Mike Link & Harvey Taylor
Produced by: Mike Link & Harvey Taylor
Performed by:

Harvey Taylor: Trumpet, Arrangement

Mike Link: Synth, Programming

Recorded at: Worldviews Studio and The Treehouse Studio

Year: 2003

Release URL: <http://www.jamendo.com/en/album/4071/>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.jamendo.com/en/artist/mike.link.harvey.taylor/>

<http://www.worldviewsmedia.com/>

<http://www.harveytaylor.net>

<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/linktaylor>

Artist Contact: mslink@wi.rr.com

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/>

Night Song

Harvey Taylor a trumpet player and Mike Link a keyboardist are solo musicians who come together to bring their two worlds together in a most enjoyable way. Mike Link brings his electronica aesthetic and pairs it with Harvey Taylor's jazz sensibility to create a terrific fresh sound. It's a treat to hear electronica that approaches a mix of 'world music' and 'trip-hop' with trumpet that reminds me of the great Miles Davis added to the mix.

Mike Link & Harvey Taylor

Milwaukee-based studio duo (Mike Link/keys, etc, Harvey Taylor/trumpet), with guest artists from the Milwaukee music scene... groove-based tunes with trumpet improvisations, etc, fusing a jazz/blues approach to contemporary electronica... world music influences combine for an eclectic mix.

09

Baiki - Positive

(from the independent release 'do it yourself')

(2:44)

BAIKI

do it yourself



Written by: Philippe Bailly

Produced by: Baïki

Performed by:

Philippe Bailly: Lead vocal

Marc Donéa: Guitars and backing vocals

Fabrice Dumont: Violin and backing vocals

Axel Marcelis: Bass

Joël Parmentier: Drums and backing vocals

Recorded at: Etages Ion, Brussels, Belgium

Year: 2006

Release URL: <http://www.jamendo.com/en/album/1604/>

Artist URLs:

<http://www.jamendo.com/en/artist/baiki>

<http://www.baiki.be/>

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/>

Positive

Baïki is punk, folk, english, french, polish. 'Positive' is extremely addictive. It also seems to be subtly subversive as any proper Punk rock should be. On the surface, it seems like an upbeat ode to positivity which I'm sure it can be. Though I pick up on subtle queues that say otherwise... is it really a criticism of those who unquestioningly go through life and accept all that's dished out to them? Throughout the song, you're presented with a positive and a negative way of responding to life...but there's one moment that strikes me as being the key to the politics of the track:

"don't say: Stop being oppressive, say: silence"

It's the only moment in the song that no positive alternative is given. Only silence. So, is it political? Am I reading too much into it? Perhaps the polish segment is a key to fully

understanding. You be the judge and read it how you want. Either way, you won't be able to stop listening.

Baïki

Baïki is a world group in every sense of the word. Originating from Brussels, Belgium, it is no wonder that their strong inclination towards multi-culture emerged.

Baïki is taken from the Polish word "bajki", which means "tales, stories". Philippe actually has Polish roots, which explains the presence of this language in some of his lyrics. But the lingual voyage does not stop at Polish as he also produces texts in Spanish, in English or even... in French.

"We make and play music, and that's it. We do not claim any particular style, nor French songs, world music or rock music. Maybe we sit at the crossing of these styles, consistently permeable to the widest possible influences."

10

Sun Zoo - The Dao of Sun Zoo (Featuring DJ HDL)

(from the independent release 'Hope Flies')

(3:41)



hope flies

SUN ZOO

Written by: Sun Zoo

Produced by: Phiba Optix

Performed by:

Sun Zoo: Music and Vocals

DJ HDL: Turntables

Recorded at: Avon Old Farms' Studio, Avon, CT.

Year: 2007

Release URL: <http://sun-zoo.com/music.htm>

Artist URLs:

<http://sun-zoo.com>

<http://myspace.com/sunzoo>

<http://brown.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2222949580>

<http://amiestreet.com/viewProfile.php?id=3896>

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The Dao of Sun Zoo

Sun Zoo returns to blocSonic with one from his previous release 'Hope Flies'. Once again with DJ HDL expertly helming the wheels of steel. Another one that represents what mainstream hip-hop should sound like, but unfortunately doesn't. Sun Zoo's flow is tight, the beat is on point and the track is an upbeat and fun way to close out this volume of the netBloc series...Peace.

Sun Zoo

Sun Zoo is an independent rapper and producer in Providence, Rhode Island. He has released three albums independently and has opened for a diverse variety of acts, including Vienna Teng (Alternative Rock/Folk), Deep Bananna Blackout (Funk) and Gabriel Yaiva and The Dream Team (hip-hop). More information, press clippings, and free downloads of two albums can be found at Sun-Zoo.com.



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