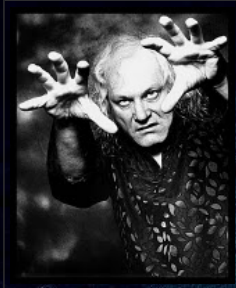
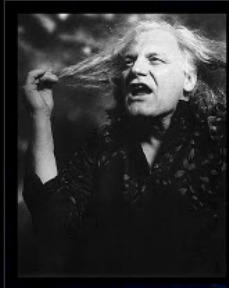


JAZZNET DENMARK

Copernicus.



Photos by Fernando Natalici.

Jazznet Denmark, had the opportunity to do an interview with the amazing poet/artist/writer/performer COPERNICUS in the beginning of september 2009.

Jazznet Denmark : How did you get in contact with the 13 musicians who contributes on your newest release "Dissapperance" and was it hard to find someone who would fit into your thoughts and visions ???

Copernicus : For "disappearance," Pierce Turner and I decided to record after being inspired to record by Leonardo Pavkovic. Pierce maintains relationships with musicians that he knows and he took charge of organizing the musicians. Matty Fillou, Cesar Argagundi, and Marvin Wright were brought in by me though the entire credit for choosing, organizing and directing the musicians belongs to Pierce Turner. Thomas Hamlin, Fred Parcells, Larry Kirwan, and Mike Fazio are all long time Copernicus musicians.

Jazznet Denmark : What music do you yourself listen to and is there some kind of music that inspires you ???

Copernicus : I have a pretty good record collection, but rarely sit back and listen to music. I am ignorant about music. I think ideas and do vocals. My ignorance about music makes me highly qualified to mix Copernicus music so that it turns out to be original. Dedicated listening to the music of other artists can only lead to becoming like them. For originality, ignorance is a strength. I could not copy another musician even if I wanted to. Pierce Turner once asked me that wasn't I afraid to walk down the street and hear a bird singing? The danger would be that I might go and copy the bird's song. I answered that it was dangerous to listen to a bird singing and I did not want to copy a bird's music and since then, I have ear plugs in my ears when I walk down the street.

Jazznet Denmark : If you should mention 5-10 records that have meant something to you, your lyrics and music, what would they be ???

Copernicus : I would say that the only interesting records that I have ever heard are the 12 albums of Copernicus. People compare Copernicus to artists that I have never heard. Tom Waits, Pink Floyd, Captain Beefheart. I never listened to these people and probably never will.

Jazznet Denmark : You are in my ears a musician who are in constant movement and going in many different directions from track to track on your releases. Where do you get your ideas from and what is your secret (if you have one) ???

Copernicus : I do not create the music. The musicians create the music. I mix the music after it is recorded and I pick the pieces to be mixed. In one recording session, we might record 45 pieces of music one after another. In this last session, we recorded 24 pieces of music in 4 hours. I picked 7 pieces for the album. (Honestly, I believe that there is another great album lurking in the recordings of the last recording session on November 2, 2009 at Water Music and I am going to make an effort to find that album.) The only secret is to see between the rough lines of what has been recorded the potentiality of a great piece.

Jazznet Denmark : Before you went in the studio to record "Dissapperance" did you have any ideas, of what you would like the music who accompanies your lyrics to sound like or was it completely improvised and out of your hands ???

Copernicus : I do not think of music before a recording session. I think about philosophical themes. I do not believe that even the musicians think about the music beforehand. Everything just springs up at the moment. Remember, improvisation is not an easy art form. First, you have to have faith in the process. The more experience you have can possibly help you, but experience is not a guarantee just a possible aid. We will spontaneously ask a musician to begin the piece and he or she will start something and then the musicians and I, the vocalist, will attach ourselves to that foundation. Noone is in control. Everybody is free. Just pure chaotic beauty and fun. I would not do it any other way.

Jazznet Denmark : What are your plans for the future and what will be the next release from you and your projects ???

Copernicus : We will re-release Nothing Exists and Victim of the Sky, the first two Copernicus albums now only on LP, in January, 2010. Somewhere along the line as soon as possible, I will either release another new cd from the last recording session or from a previous recording session with some Harlem musicians that I had not respected properly in the past.

Jazznet Denmark : If a new listener was about to buy his first recording with your music. Which one would you recommend as the best introduction to your amazing music ???

Copernicus : Copernicus should be experienced only in the order of the creation of each album with the awareness that there is an evolution going on in the artist and to experience that evolution you should only listen to the records in the order that they were created. Namely the records should be experienced in the following order:

Nothing Exists (1985)
Victim of the Sky (1986)
Deeper (1989)
Null (1990)
No Borderline (1993)
Immediate Eternity (2001)
La Eternidad Inmediata (2001)
Immediate Eternity II (2005)
La Eternidad Inmediata II (2005)
Die Sofortige Ewigkeit II (2005)
L'Éternité Immédiate II (2005)
disappearance (2009)

In addition, after listening to No Borderline, they should read Copernicus' book, Immediate Eternity, published in 2001. It can also be read in Spanish. By listening to the records out of chronological order, a listener can get confused and do not experience the actual evolution of the artist in his philosophical ideas and artistic skill. The list of recordings above represents 24 years of struggle and sacrifice and really every youth should totally understand the process and struggle to which Copernicus has put himself.

Jazznet Denmark : I myself see your music as interesting, exciting and captivating listening. But i have to admit that i can easily imagine it having a kind of frightening and scary effect on some people. Is that something you have heard before and what are your thoughts about it ???

Copernicus : I just did an interview at a college radio station and the interviewer asked the same question. If a person is living in a world of false illusion with no knowledge or caring for the reality of the subatomic, that person is living in a distorted dream bubble and the revolutionary statements of Copernicus will frighten this person and should frighten this person. Facing the reality of the subatomic as it destroys the Disneyland of the world of the bare human senses is traumatic. A person can face the reality of the subatomic or he or she can turn on the television set and not face it. To be or not to be. That is the question. What is the true definition of a man and of a woman? Does a person's self respect mean that he or she will not face or at least try to understand a reality that is put before them that may have importance? Does a person just turn his or her back, giggle, and snort? Consciousness of the subatomic is a reality that humanity has to face or remain living according to the perceptions of the bare senses. Defining reality with the bare senses is what humanity has done since coming down from the trees and it is wrong. If you care about reality, you must acquire the proper tools to understand reality and be strong in your convictions. The subatomic is a real place and must be part of the human consciousness.

Jazznet Denmark : I have read somewhere that you are a former Roman catholic and now a free thinker with no religion. Why did you leave the catholic world ??? Are you now a non-believer ???

Copernicus : I have a notebook in which I wrote when I was 17 years old about my love for Jesus. I also have another notebook when I was 21 in which I wrote about my doubts about Jesus. From the nuns in elementary school to the monks in secondary school and then to the atheists in the University, the teachers dominated my thinking at every turn. And then I was free of them all and traveled the world to find my own interpretation of what was real. Being free of teachers, I became my own teacher with no trust in any teacher. I trusted myself and still trust only myself today.

At the age of 36, and after an excruciating 15 year search of the planet (documented in the piece, Let Me Rest in Nothing Exists), I discovered the atom, applied it to my philosophy and came out with the idea that nothing exists including myself, an idea that I have not heard anyone else talk about in the entire history of humanity. Today, for me, the Catholic Church is and has always been a criminal mafia exploiting the ignorance of humanity for its own material wealth. I left that world because I was searching for Truth not crime and exploitation of the illiterate.

Jazznet Denmark : Your music is hard to put in any musical boxes, because it has so many different styles mixed with each other. In my opinion you belong in the avantgarde part of the music world. Do you agree with that and what are your opinions on that genre and genres in general ???

Copernicus : Major record companies have dominated the output of artists for such a long time and have used music to just make money. Music was to make money not to tell the Truth as the artist sees the Truth. These companies could have taken some of their profits and cultivated new music, but they did not. Now the public has rejected the junk that they have created junk that reaches to the lowest level of human intelligence. True art challenges you and makes you reach and gives you what you cannot find anywhere else. Copernicus is not avant garde. Avant garde is just a term of prejudice to keep people away. Copernicus is just a normal human saying stuff that matters to people and other animals with normal musicians making sounds.

Jazznet Denmark : When you write the lyrics to a new project, how is the process ??? do you go away to a deserted place all alone and write or something like that ???

Copernicus : Writing is only a process of discipline. If you are going to write, you should write every day at a given hour in a given place with no distractions. With discipline, every writing project will do well. It took me 3 years to write Immediate Eternity. Most of the writing was done at my computer in New York, but 20% of the writing was done on my mountain in Ecuador. Most of the lyrics of the albums have come from the top of my head spontaneously with a few exceptions.

Jazznet Denmark : You have released numerous recordings over the years. Is there some of them in particular, you see as more important or landmarks in your production than others ???

Copernicus : I really like Nothing Exists but like a good father, I love all of my children equally and think that they all have equal importance in their own time frame.

Jazznet Denmark : At your concerts and on your records as well, how much is improvised and how much is planned before start ?

Copernicus : Originally, both lyrics and music were all created on stage, but when we were faced with our tour of Europe, we began to rehearse. Today, my

Copernicus : Originally, both lyrics and music were all created on stage, but when we were faced with our tour of Europe, we began to rehearse. Today, my concerts have a great deal more planning, though improvisation is always an important factor in everything that Copernicus does.

Jazznet Denmark : Your release "Immediate eternity" has been released in 4 different versions, one in english, one in german, one in french and one in spanish. Besides that it was released as a 200 page book in two languages, german and english. Could you tell us a little about that massive project, how it got made and why the many versions ???

Copernicus : Immediate Eternity- The sixth Copernicus album. Released 2001. Recorded in Ecuador with Ecuadorian musicians. We now see a more secure optimistic Copernicus still caring for humanity but finding fault with human lack of respect for the atomic view of reality and finding fault in humanity's damaging of the environment. Copernicus has now grown deeper in his attack on the concept of identity and, prophetically and frighteningly, paints a planet where human ignorance turns humanity, itself, back into atoms. Inspiration for this recording session came from the manuscript of Immediate Eternity, published in English and Spanish also in 2001.

La eternidad inmediata- The seventh Copernicus album. Released 2001. This is Immediate Eternity above translated into Spanish with the vocal recorded over the same music as Immediate Eternity.

Immediate Eternity II- The eighth Copernicus album. Released 2005. With the release of la eternidad inmediata in Ecuador, Copernicus and the musicians of the album proceeded to perform 25 concerts all over Ecuador with a concert that was very faithful to the original album. The concerts were always done in Spanish. With recording costs very low in Ecuador, Copernicus decided to re-record the original Immediate Eternity after the 25 concerts. He recorded the album in Spanish because he had never performed the concert in English and to this day would have to prepare to perform this concert in English and then he redid the vocal in English and called the album, Immediate Eternity II, since the lyrics and music were very similar to the original.

La eternidad inmediata II- the ninth Copernicus album. Released 2005. With the release of la eternidad inmediata in Ecuador, Copernicus and the musicians of the album proceeded to perform 25 concerts all over Ecuador with a concert that was very faithful to the original album. The concerts were always done in Spanish. With recording costs very low in Ecuador, Copernicus decided to re-record the original la eternidad inmediata after the 25 concerts and called the album la eternidad inmediata II.

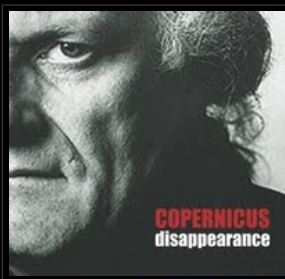
L'eternite immediate II- This is the tenth Copernicus album. Released 2005. With the release of la eternidad inmediata in Ecuador, Copernicus and the musicians of the album proceeded to perform 25 concerts all over Ecuador with a concert that was very faithful to the original album. The concerts were always done in Spanish. With recording costs very low in Ecuador, Copernicus decided to re-record the original la eternidad inmediata after the 25 concerts in Spanish. He then had the lyrics translated to French in Guayaquil and re-did the vocal in French over the music of la eternidad inmediata II and called the album, l'eternite immediate II.

Die Sofortige Ewigkeit II- This is the eleventh Copernicus album. Released 2005.

With the release of la eternidad inmediata in Ecuador, Copernicus and the musicians of the album proceeded to perform 25 concerts all over Ecuador with a concert that was very faithful to the original album. The concerts were always done in Spanish. With recording costs very low in Ecuador, Copernicus decided to re-record the original la eternidad inmediata after the 25 concerts in Spanish. He then had the lyrics translated to German in Guayaquil and re-did the vocal in German over the music of la eternidad inmediata II and called the album, Die Sofortige Ewigkeit II.

The book, Immediate Eternity- published in 2001 in New York. This book takes up the space of Copernicus time from 1993 to 2001 though in 1998, there was a major recording session in New York with Harlem musicians. This album was never released but will be released in the near future. The book inspired six Copernicus albums and helped advance his thinking to a place where spontaneous performance could not go. Immediate Eternity is the next intellectual step after 1993's NO BORDERLINE CD.

The book, la eternidad inmediata- This is the book, Immediate Eternity, translated faithfully into Spanish under Copernicus' supervision and published in Ecuador and the United States in 2001.



Copernicus : Disappearance (Nevermore/MoonJune Records).

Lad mig starte med at sige at denne cd er en af de udgivelser, der ikke sætter sig fast i ens bevidsthed lige med det samme. Den kræver gentagne gennemlytninger for rigtig at bide sig fast. Jeg har lyttet til denne cd adskillige gange og den har ikke helt fået 100% fat endnu, men den er helt sikkert på vej. Copernicus - eller Joseph Smalkovitz som han rigtig hedder - er manden bag teksterne som holder til i den mørke og dystre afdeling af registeret, tekster som til tider virker lidt mystiske, sære og ikke lige til at gennemskue. Numrene varierer i længde fra omkring 6 til 21 minutter, med titler som "Atomic New Orleans", "Poor homo sapiens", "Humanity created the illusion of itself" og "Revolution!". Copernicus tager sig af vokal og keyboards og bliver bakket op af et erfarent hold af musikere fra den eksperimenterende scene i New York, hvor af mange af dem har spillet sammen med Copernicus i flere år. Instrumenterne der bliver spillet på er blandt meget andet guitar, trombone, violin, tuba, trommer, piano, keyboards, saxofoner, bas og percussions. Copernicus' vokal er i nogen få passager stille, rolig, næsten afdæmpet men i de fleste tilfælde er den aggressiv, brutal og nærmest

klaustrofobisk. Musikken der akkompagnerer Copernicus særegne vokal, er fuldstændig improviseret. Da musikerne mødte op i studiet var der ingen nodeark eller retningslinier af nogen art. De vidste ikke hvordan musikken ville ende med at blive, det i sig selv gør denne udgivelse for en interessant en af slagsen for denne anmelder. Musikken indeholder inspiration fra flere forskellige musik genrer, der iblandt klassisk, jazz og advandtgarde musik. Denne cd er tusindvis af kilometer, fra al den ligegyldige metervare musik der findes derude og ligner ikke ret meget af det jeg har hørt før. Så tag chancen og invester dine penge i Copernicus, måske fanger det dig, måske gør det ikke. Anmeldt af Henrik Kaldahl.

More reviews coming soon.....

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