

Music

Ultrahang Festival 2010

Electronic and experimental sounds rule in the tenth running of this alternative event. **Aniko Fenyvesi** expands her aural universe.

If you're tired of conventional melodies and market-driven music, the **Ultrahang Festival** has enough diversions to please even the most discerning listener. For the past ten years, the UH has challenged and enlightened the ears of Budapest and will do so again October 6-10 in a series of concerts, sound installations and DJ gigs taking place at the Merlin Theatre.

With an impressive list of 40 artists from 20 countries, the festival's dedicated volunteers have scouted out some real gems that range from demented pop to grinding rock, thoughtful electronica and pure noise. Here we touch on some highlights.

Electronica is the main thread at UH, and the festival will bring in performers like **Atom™**, one of the many aliases of German electronica musician Uwe Schmidt, known also as Senior Coconut. He'll be taking his old-school electronics, vocoder vocals and funky remixes to the stage on Thursday October 7 at 9.15pm. **STU** aka 'Don Atari Electro', master of the Atari soundchip, will perform his manic low-tech beats and fat bass lines on Saturday October 9. That same night, after midnight, legendary tech house producer



and DJ **Thomas Fehlmann**, known primarily for his work with The Orb, will be spinning a DJ set.

Representing a popular music style, if you can call it that, **The Complainers** take pop conventions for a wild ride, just after midnight on Wednesday October 6. Fronted by indie record label legend Wojciech Kucharczyk from Poland, this creative synthesis combines acoustic and electronic instrumentation and experimental noise for an adventurous live stage show.

UH also has their bases covered on the noise rock front. **Talibam!** will perform agro-improv free-jazz noise rock on Thursday October 7 at 9.15pm. Layered with distorted synths and driving percussion, this American duo delivers improvised chaos in the form of pure musical energy. **Shit and Shine** (Thursday October 7, 10pm), which are already pretty noisy, will be gratuitously amped up for this live performance with the addition of ten drummers from Hungary. **Guido Möbius**, who performs on Friday October 8 at 9pm, is a one-man show and master of the loop-stations and many pedals he arranges on the floor during his live shows. While feeding them vocals and guitar riffs, he creates a densely layered sound that occasionally even resembles a melody.

Late-night ambience and atmospheric lies in the skilled hands of artists like **Demdike Stars** (after midnight, Friday October 8) a duo out of the UK who



Ultrahang artists **Kria Brekkan** (top left); **STU** (above); **Talibam!** (below)

travel the eerie and gothic side of dub and electronica. **Pole** aka Stefan Betke, follows up even later that night, with a set of abstract, minimal electronica with a downtempo beat.

Equally atmospheric though decidedly more melodic, **Kria Brekkan** (aka Kristín Anna Valtýsdóttir), formerly of the Icelandic band múm, performs on Saturday October 9 at 10pm. For this solo effort, she has crafted thoughtful and melancholic melodies that put her multi-instrumental capabilities to good use. Of a similar ilk, **Ignatz**, the alter-ego of Bram Devens, will play on Sunday October 10 at 10pm. His speciality is effects-driven improvisations that revolve around the sounds of a guitar and Devens's hypnotic voice.

Noise at UH comes in all forms and some artists even make music out of it, as is the case with **Skylla** (Wednesday October 6, 7pm) a female duo from Vienna who uses computers, samplers, digital effects

modules and a guitar to produce their unique brand of rhythmic noise. Later that evening, the **Groupshow** features the electronic creations of three diverse composers: Jan Jelinek, Andrew Pekler and Hanno Leichtmann. Their glitchy, psychedelic tinklings provide the perfect festival warm-up.

Lionel Marchetti, on the other hand, is part of the festival's cool down, though his music is anything but chilled. Instead, he offers an invigorating and sometimes difficult listening experience with only occasional hints of melody. Credited as a practitioner of musique concrète, the French-born Marchetti will perform on Sunday October 10 at 8pm, using eight speakers and a few peculiar electronic devices.

Ultrahang Festival (www.fest2010.uh.hu), October 6-10, Merlin, V. Gerlőczyutca 4 (317 9338/www.merlin-budapest.org). M1, M2, M3 Deák tér. Admission: pass Ft9,000; day ticket Ft2,500.

