

Janek Schaefer [musical biography]

Janek Schaefer was born in middle England to a Polish model and a Canadian scientist in 1970. After preparing sound collages as a young boy Janek's musical career was fractured in his teens when, as Head Chorister at school, his voice broke..... A decade later while studying architecture at the Royal College of Art the fragmented noises of a sound activated tape recorder travelling overnight through the postal system were to relaunch his audio career. That piece, called 'Recorded Delivery' was made for an exhibition with one time postman Brian Eno [now available as a red 7" on Hot Air]. Since then the nature of sound has been Janek's primary area of exploration, resulting in many installations and sound collages for exhibitions and most notably performances involving his highly original Tri-phonic Turntable [a three tone arm multi-record, reversible play infinite vari-speed turntable] which is combined with live electronic manipulations and found sound in a 'Concrète ruffian style' [The Wire 1998]. His most recent research has been examining the role of the record [vinyl] as a compositional tool [see below] His third album is due for release on Sub Rosa records in November 2001, with current collaborations due for release with Robert Hampson [as Comae on Rhiz Records], Martin Tétreault, Christian Fennesz and Philip Jeck. Janek now operates from his Oval office in London.

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Tri-phonic Turntable

The Tri-phonic turntable is a three tone arm, two direction, multi-level, micro vari-speed vinyl manipulator. This instrument was invented and built by Janek in 1997, It is the only turntable with such potential in existence.

It's primary function is to enable a maximum variety of multiple manipulations to be made to any vinyl surface, unlocking a whole new alternate sound world. These sound relationships mostly discovered by chance are then harnessed and used to compose live sound collages incorporating abstracted found sound, primitive electronic textures and electro-acoustic methodologies. The resulting emotive soundscapes inhabit the architecture of the mind's eye.

The project was initially influenced by the 180 turntable work 'Vinyl Requiem' by Philip Jeck. Here the Tri-phonic inversely becomes a condensed schizophrenic interpreter with an indiscriminate personality of it's own, curated and taught by the operator.

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Shifted Centre Vinyl

A new cutting technique invented by me in 1999 for the current single 'Wow' on Diskono. The spiral groove is repositioned off centre on the vinyl surface to invoke a very pronounced fluctuating wow sound as the tone arm sweeps from side to side on the turntable. This technique forces a new composition to be created in collaboration with the turntable itself. An LP collaboration with Philip Jeck expanding the Shifted Centre technique is due for release in 2001.

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Twin Turntable

Two tone-arm turntable created in 2001 for the Eccentric/Concentric LP exhibited at 'The Rumble' exhibition at The Royal Society of British Sculptors. Twin grooves each containing an identical unmodulating tone. One is cut and plays normally. The other is cut off-centre on the same side which causes the tone arm to move from side to side creating fluctuation in the playing speed. This results in a sine wave type tone being created from the original continuous sound. They are played simultaneously at different pitches.

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