

# Zebra



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# MONEY

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INSIDE: OLIVER LEIB, ATOM HEART, JAMES LAVELLE,  
ZEBRA AWARDS, 1995 ROUND-UPS

# NUCLEAR PACEMAKER

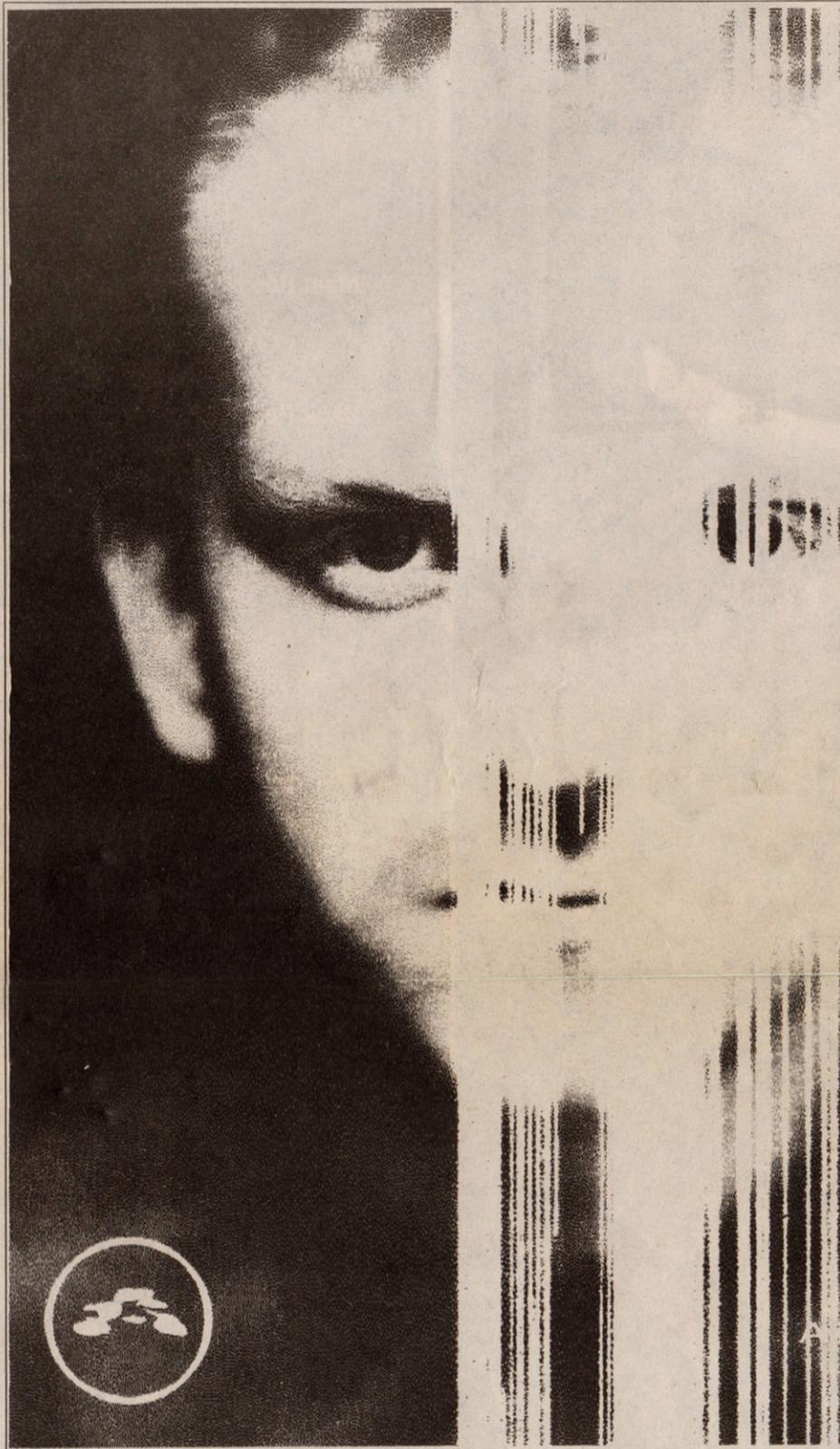
## Andrez performs open-heart surgery on Uwe Schmidt AKA Atom Heart

While the name Uwe Schmidt is not perhaps a recognisable one, plenty of this man's aliases are. Working with various forms of electronic music under project titles such as Atom Heart, Lassigue Bendthaus, Atomu Shinzo and Datacide, Herr Schmidt has produced a broad-spectrum soundscape that's touched upon ambience, trance, EBM, industrial, acid, jazz, house, and quite often territory unable to be labelled at all. While Uwe's live performance at Earthcore on New Year's Eve will be his baptismal visit to this city, he's already ingratiated himself into the Melbourne techno scene - Atom Heart played alongside Zen Paradox a number of times when Steve Law toured Europe earlier this year, and they in fact jammed together at one party; more recently Uwe completed two remixes for David Thrussell's Black Lung project.

The individual who is Atom Heart, Lassigue Bendthaus, Datacide, Atomu Shinzo, VSVN, Dots, *ad infinitum*, creates different sounds and diverse musical styles under each and every project name. With this in mind I thought it would be interesting to understand what criteria Uwe sets himself and how he differentiates between the projects when he sits down to make music. "Well, for each of these projects I have a certain image", he explains. "It's like a picture of sounds I would like to create, and once I've chosen a name for a project it becomes connected with this image. Whenever I think I'm able to create another picture like that I return to the project. The main idea behind it is to create different styles and different images as well." Uwe ponders upon the matter a moment longer. "Sometimes I first come up with the name of the project and then come up with the artwork, and then with the music - it's all very different. But the image is very important and I always have the image in my mind before I create the music."

One previous quote from Uwe Schmidt that I'd read declares that his main interest lies within the permanent development of musical language itself, and its mutation and abstraction by using current technology. How successful does he feel he's been in doing exactly that? "Well, there are some things I've done which, when I've listened to them later, make me feel that I've really achieved something from my point of view in terms of how I consider music and what's going on right now in electronic music. But I can only comment according to my own taste and my own perspective. There are some things I've come up with which are really new to my ear, which I didn't hear before."

Privacy and anonymity also play an important part in Uwe's lifestyle, and as with any enigma where information is lacking, impressions all too distant from reality come into play. One such circulating belief



regarding Atom Heart was that he was Japanese, and not German at all. Uwe isn't surprised, especially given his project name Atomu Shinzo, and he endeavours to proffer up an explanation. "A friend of mine, Tetsu Inoue who I also collaborate with sometimes in New York, is Japanese. At the time I was trying to establish many different projects with different labels, and I had to come up with lots of names. I asked him what Atom Heart was in Japanese, and Atomu Shinzo is the translation. I thought it was quite funny to use this one. And I also use the French translation."

When Uwe released "I" and "Ongaku" he was attributed with triggering the Frankfurt trance movement that took off in 1992. It's a territory that this artist quickly left behind but the trance enigma continues to dominate much of the techno scene throughout Germany three years later, and in my conversations with Cem Oral from Jammin' Unit and Martin Damm from Biochip C, and also Thomas Heckmann, all three lamented that commercial trance stifles the true creativity of electronic music.

"I agree with those sentiments", Uwe responds. "I think now there are some quite interesting things happening here in Germany and also the rest of Europe. Many musicians are stuck in this trance and acid scene on a commercial level; it's selling quite well and there are big raves like Love Parade and May Day. But on the other hand there are many people bored by this and they're looking for something different. They want to get around from this established style which has been around for three years, and I think there's definitely something new due to come up. They're looking for inspiration."

What new directions would the individual behind Atom Heart prescribe? "I'm pretty much right now interested in all kinds of organic sounds; things I really don't like right now are these four-on-the-floor bass drum sounds, steady rhythms and everything that is static. Right now I think these things should disappear! In England for example they dance to jungle and break-beat, but for Germans everything has to be static, like marching music." He laughs. "I would like to develop a new flowing, organic music to replace the static - more like jazz and funk influenced." Dare we say trip hop? "No - I appreciate these hip hop rhythms, but what I mean by organic is more like a flowing rhythm, yet you cannot count the beats or get into on it on a logical level. It's music that's flowing without repetition, but you can still dance to it, and also at a faster speed without being jungle."

Uwe has recently completed a couple of remixes for Melbourne act Black Lung. "When I do a remix I first listen to the complete track and then I listen to the single elements. I always try to understand what the original track wanted and sometimes try to give it a different note. It's really different from remix to remix, but this time I really got stuck into one or two samples and they triggered a certain image, and so I did two mixes - one is quite rhythmic and was based on one drum-loop; the other is quite psychedelic, almost a 60's revival! It's a very strange mixture out of a very strange mix to start with."

Atom Heart will play live at Earthcore in Daylesford this New Year's Eve, supported by local artists Zen Paradox, Voiteck, Arthur Arkin, Digital Primate and Controlled Atmosphere, as well as DJ's Mad Rod, Andrew Till, Fred Disko, David Thrussell, Squidgy, Sam, Andrez, Trish, Ross Healy, Guido and accomplices. Tickets cost \$20 and check fliers or elsewhere in this issue for full details.

# TYPIST REQUIRED

by

# Zebra



Melbourne's weekly club culture magazine requires an assistant to the editor to work two days a week, Fridays and Mondays, entering text for Zebra. Applicants must be able to type accurately at a minimum of 50 words per minute and have some sort of computer experience, preferably in Microsoft Word on Apple Mac. A general interest in the club and dance music scene is also an advantage. Please do not waste your time or ours by applying if you do not meet the above requirements.

Interested applicants should call DARREN FISHMAN on 9696-4511 on WEDNESDAY 3RD JANUARY after 2pm.