

Date: February 3, 2008
DIVA Center 110 W. Broadway, Eugene
Contact: Eric Ostlind
Phone: 344-3482
E-Mail: eric@divanow.org

Subject: Justice Yeldham at DIVA Center

Don Haugen's Music At The Edge Series brings Australian trumpet player Justice Yeldham to the DIVA Center at 9pm on Thursday, March 27th. Also performing: Soup Purse from Portland, Warning Broken Machine and (_____) from Eugene. Other groups to be announced. Admission: \$6.00

PRESS KIT: JUSTICE YELDHAM

For full tour dates please visit <http://dualplover.com/tocome.htm>

BIOGRAPHY.

What's been described as "a trumpet player trapped in a two dimensional universe" is in fact the unique audio work of Justice Yeldham, a maverick musician with an unhealthy obsession with sheets of broken glass. By pressing his face and lips against the glass whilst employing various vocal techniques ranging from throat singing to raspberries, he turns disfigured household windows into crude musical instruments. Resulting in a wide variety of cacophonous noises that are strangely controlled and oddly musical.

Justice Yeldham is the latest alter-ego of Australian sound performer Lucas Abela, whose past sonic experiments were conducted under monikers like Dj Smallcock & Peeled Hearts Paste. Initially he was classed as an experimental turntablist, although his early work rarely resembled anything in the field. Early feats, saw him stab vinyl with Kruger style stylus gloves, bound on electro acoustic trampolines, perform deaf defying duet duels with amplified samurai swords, hospitalised by high powered turntables constructed from sewing machine motors, record chance John Peel sessions with the Flaming Lips, & be Otomo Yoshihides' favourite entry into his Ground Zero remix competition; 'Consummation' even though instead of sampling the CD he destroyed it using amplified skewers! He also founded and runs dualpLOVER (recording label, cd/dvd replicators, distributor and promoter of gigs and tours).

Principally a live audio artist he's been performing professionally for the past 14 years, ever since Oren Ambarchi and Robbie Avenaim stumbled across his late night radio performances in 1994 and asked him to play their 2nd What is Music? Festival. Since he's toured the world extensively, performing in well over 30 countries.

TESTAMONIALS.

"Yeldham's live performance consists of grinding his face into a sheet of mic'd up plate glass. It is hideous for a variety of reasons. One is that the transparency of the glass means you get to view his face all squished up against the other side of the glass like a kid on a special bus wiping his nose down the window as you overtake them on the motorway. Another reason is the sound really is quite nasty. The resonant properties of the glass means as he yells onto/into it and then pulls and squeezes at the sheet, the pitch of his voice wildly varies and wavers and this in turn is run through some truly ugly processing that makes it sound like a Dalek in it's death throes."

-Chris Summerlin on 151105 nottingham

"Blood. Noise. Broken Glass. KY Jelly. justice yeldham is once seen, never forgotten. Working at the bleeding edge of performance art and noise terror mentalism with adash of carny showboating, he screams and hyperventilates into contact microphones while his laptop morphs the nightmarish results into inhuman ring-modulated torture. This is a perfectly formed miniature that says a great deal about the principles of performance, entertainment and the wisdom of standing at the back."

-venue magazine on 081105 bristol.

"A writhing, contorting, nauseating, sensational screamingfuckingbloodymess, the 33-year-old Australian glassjaw who performs as Justice Yeldham And The Dynamic Ribbon Device has a show so visceral, so alive, that it can move a room full of the most jaded noisenrrds to gaping-mouthed wonderment. The pock-marked bloke born Lucas Abela, mischievously takes the stage of Denver avant-loft/noisenik playhouse Monkey Mania wearing a belt surrounded by distortion pedals and a single contact mic limply dangling from a wire. He squeezes a tube of KY Jelly all over his weathered mug and into his mouth. He clicks on the pedals and presses he face to a triangle of glass. Hideous black garglescuzz pours out of the speaker, each yelp, hum and fart matching his face's disgusting rubbery contortions. The sounds are inhuman, but their

patterns are most definitely familiar, a hyper-distorted screech-tantrum howling in bone-rattling harmonies, all set to the bittersweet aroma of warm lube. He leaps into the crowd, face twisted into apoplectic distortions, and begins seizing. And here is where everyone starts flipping the fuck out. Abela gnaws on the glass like a lion gutting an antelope. Each sickly crack jettisons through the distortion pedals, blorts out the amp and is followed by the screams of shock, fear, joy and various combinations of the three. The glass comes smashing down on his face. He waits, panting, for the cheers and screams to die down. His cheek is oozing blood from a sharp red line. His earlobe is sliced open and spitting a steady stream down his neck onto his KY-soaked shirt."

-christopher r. weingarten on 030405 denver

"It was louder than anything that had preceded it, and it had an organic quality that demanded my attention - so I took a look. The Australian stood in the middle of a semi-circle of onlookers, the DJ and a hospita Igurney behind him. He wore a belt of effects peddles about his waste which were wired to a contact microphone affixed to a three foot long triangular piece of plate glass that was balanced on one shoulder and pressed wickedly against his face with both hands. It was like some perverse facial ham press. He blew into the glass like a trumpet player trapped in a two dimensional universe, sliding the glass back and forth across his face to change the pitch, vibrating and adjusting pressure to alter the tambour. The sound was a combination of the vibrations created by his manipulations and the feedback from the amplification, and he truly played it like an instrument. In totality, it was kind of like a cross between a dental vacuum and a jet engine - two of my favorite sounds. The first cuts I noticed were on his shoulder where hewas supporting most of the weight of the glass. His tee shirt had been sliced in two or three places, and a little bit of blood was starting to show. It was evident that this was going to be more than anyone had expected, and to drive that point home, he stuck the narrow end of the triangle as far into his mouth as he could fit it - and bit down. Breathing through barred, clenched teeth, a whole new sound appeared and then the glass gave way, shattering in his mouth. Quickly spitting out what he could, the larger, unbroken section of glass was again up against his face - smaller now, higher in pitch and somehow more urgent. His mouth was bleeding, and the distorted image of his face took on a new aspect of horror as the blood formed an organic liquid gasket between man and instrument. The intensity of the noise had not let up one bit, and with a few quick twists of the knobs on his belt any sense of waning was replaced by a new level of sound and violence. He bit the glass again, removing another big

chunk, and then returned to the "first position," now with a piece of glass less than half its original size. Again, the sound advanced to a new intensity, and at this point his entire face was red with blood that was mixing with his saliva and mucus to drip in tendrils from his hands, chin, and of course the glass. By this point, he was completely unable to stand still. The focus and control of his initial stance was replaced by a twisting, stomping, arching tangle of odd dance moves clearly inspired by the drive to continue the performance to its conclusion. The final moments of the performance are hard to describe - suffice it to say that there was no piece of glass remaining that was larger than two inches in size. I was definitely left with an awareness that I had seen something that was totally for real - and I know that I've been a better person for it in the three days since."

-micheal SMITH on los angeles 050305

"A barefoot Australian in faded jeans and a beer shirt was strapping on a belt of electronic devices. Two wires led from the belt. One was attached to a large set of speakers and the other was attached to a jagged piece of glass. This was Justice Yeldham and the Dynamic Ribbon Device. The sound man turned on the power and the whole contraption started to hum ominously. Meanwhile our shoeless bloke was squeezing half a tube of KY jelly onto his face and into his mouth. The live music performance was about to begin. He played the device by rubbing his face up against the glass. The sound traveled down the wire and into a set of amplifiers and distortion boxes attached to his waist. This distressing music then came squealing out of the speakers at incredible decibels, instantly deafening all other sounds. Eyes widened in uncertainty and hands covered ears but he played on. He played with agonizing passion, sliding his face against the glass while flecks of KY jelly flew in all directions. The front row of spectators inched backwards out of spray range and some fled altogether. I was transfixed. As he glided his cheek across the glass he played with the switches on his belt. The squealing noise varied in pitch but never in intensity. It was like electrified teeth rubbing on a blackboard. It was like uncontrolled guitar feedback played backwards. It shouted of sorrow. It screamed of pain. It was art. Five minutes into the performance and his mouth was cut by the glass as he played the edge. Blood mixed with KY jelly in a red smear. More spectators fled. The sound continued to attack us in volleys of crazed noise until the final spike as he smashed the pane of glass. Then it was over. I didn't know whether to clap, laugh or pray."

-Ravi Jeyachandran on 040604 beirut.

TRANSCRIPT OF A RECENT INTERVIEW.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the concept, can you describe how you 'play' glass?

Firstly the glass is amplified using a contact transducer designed for use with grand pianos. Then with what's been described as a 'trumpet played trapped in a two dimensional universe' I press my lips against the glass' surface and vibrate it using a vocal technique like humming crossed with throat singing. One thing I don't do is scream, ever! The vocalisations I make are minute smallish sounds that are magnified with extreme gain, when heard forms a cacophonous eruption that may sound like but is in no way screaming.

Do you ever find that people are so caught up in what you're doing and things like the shattering glass that they forget to actually listen and respond to the noise and music you're creating?

Absolutely, all the time to the point where a lot of people consider what I do performance art. And they're wrong, my primary concern whether it be the glass now or any of my past work has always been sound creation. I didn't think to myself glass, blood, yeah, that'll make a shocking show! The fact is the idea just came to me during sound-check, at the time I was playing a hand held garden hoe where I basically pressed the metal against my mouth and played it in much the same way as I do the glass. When I spotted a sheet of glass in the corner of the room my first thoughts were that the audience would be able to see my vocal techniques and that glass has great resonant potential, the dangerous part didn't even occur to me. Sure now I like to put on a show and ham it up a bit with the biting and the smashing and consider aspects like the mesmerising fear I can instil upon the audience as an integral part of the appeal, but it's not the show. If it was I would be intentionally cutting myself up every time I play which I don't, and when I do cut myself it is always an accidental and symptomatic aspect to what I am doing.

You began your experimental career by playing pieces of scrap metal with your mouth... what drew you to create noise and music in this way?

Well essentially I began my musical life as an experimental turntablist which over time has warped into the show I do today. I guess all evidence of turntablism disappeared during my first tour outside of Australia in 1997. Before then I was playing high powered motorised turntables with hand held styli. Basically a percussive instrument were

I used amplified stainless steel turkey skewers (like drum sticks), scraping them against various spinning surfaces (records/ circular saw blades/ grinding stones/ steel platters etc) attached to the motors. The motorised half of the instrument was far too heavy for touring so I rebuilt them in Osaka. These new motors weren't as powerful as the ones I left back home and during my first shows they would simply stop spinning whenever the skewers touched them, not having enough power to deal with the friction. So In desperation on stage I started shoving these skewers into my mouth which is basically when my vocal period began.

Having been around the music scene for nearly two decades, do you notice people respond differently to seeing you perform now than in the 90's? Are people more receptive now?

It's hard to judge from my perspective peoples differing responses over the years, let alone the differences between then and now. Back then I played for my friends at home and now I play for strangers around the world, I think the fact that the strangers applaud as loudly if not more so than my friends is a testament that I must be doing something worthwhile.

I'd imagine you'd have a wonderful collection of instruments, including home-made... do you have a few favourites?

Unfortunately due to my transient lifestyle and times of homelessness most of my earlier instruments are long gone lost, which is another reason the glass appeals to me so much, I don't have to travel with anything.

How much of an outlet is there for musicians like you to release and showcase their music and have it heard?

Musicians like me can have a pretty hard time especially in this country and especially in Sydney city where even conventional bands have trouble finding shows. My advice to musicians like me is to make your own opportunities. If you can't get a gig start a venue. If you cant get released, start a label. If you wanna tour, go.

Is it possible for Australian noise artists to make a living doing this?

In Australia that's an impossible concept, for a marginal musician to make a living in this country! To start with there's not enough places to play and distances between cities makes touring unprofitable. So if you're restricted in your ability to perform your art, all you're left with

is recording. Unfortunately unless you play live its difficult to get people interested in these recordings. So compared to like minded musicians in other countries with large populations and many cities your creative growth is relatively stifled as your ability to grow your music audience if greatly reduced.

Is there much of a sense of community amongst Australian noise musicians?

I think as a people we tend to look outwardly for our culture, always elevating foreign acts over our own as we lack the confidence in who we are to truly admire what's going on locally. While in America and Europe these thoughts never enter their heads, where they tend to seek and celebrate within their own communities and thus have a greater sense of them than I believe we experience locally.

What do you love about performing?

The energy I can tap from an audience. I'm essentially a live performer, I rarely record and don't rehearse. Practically my entire musical evolution has been acted out on stage. Without an audience I cant seem to transgress myself, becoming ecstatic to the point were like say a yogi I can bite the glass and run its sharp edges across my face without hurting myself. I liken it to walking on hot coals, where in a frenzied moment I become completely impervious to the material, sure I get the occasional cut but when you consider what actually happened I'm pretty well unscathed. Opposed to my normal self who regularly cuts himself just choosing the sheet of glass.

Do you find that overseas audiences and markets are more receptive to avant-garde music?

They aren't more receptive there's just more of them. It's a marginal music here and there, the difference is simply a matter of population. Doing a show in Paris is no bigger than doing a show in Sydney the only difference is after Paris I could play Brussels then Amsterdam then Hamburg and keep playing in different cities every-night all within short distances of each other without out running out of places to play while here I'd spend 12 hours driving to Melbourne then would have to turn around and go home.

Lucas Abela CV
Selected Festival Appearances.

2007

Unsound Festival, Prague, Czech Republic
Donau Festival, Krems, Austria.
Sonic Protest, Paris, France.
Observatori Festival, Valencia, Spain
La Weekend, Stirling, Scotland
Venn Festival, Bristol, England
Liquid Architecture, Melbourne, Victoria

2006

Tiny Noise, Sofia, Bulgaria
Electrograph, Athens, Greece
Franko B, Colchester, England
Unsound Festival, Wagga Wagga, NSW
Straight Out of Brisbane, Brisbane, Queensland

2005

No Trend; London, England
Les Voutes, Paris, France.
Ertz, San Sebastian, Spain
Lausanne Underground Film Festival, Lausanne, Switzerland.
Ekko Festival, Bergen, Norway
Unsound Festival, Krakow, Poland
Jon Roses'Panikkin (The Melbourne International Arts Festival),
Melbourne, Victoria
Liquid Architecture, Melbourne, Victoria
This Is Not Art, Newcastle, NSW
No Fun Festival, New York, USA
GAS (Glass Arts Society) Conference, Adelaide, South Australia

2004

Ideal Festival, Goteborg, Sweden
Transmediale, Berlin, Germany
Noise Festival, Ljubljana, Slovenia
LEM Festival (Caixaforum), Barcelona, Spain
Brake My Brick (Liverpool Biennial), Liverpool, England

2003

Turnament, Los Angeles, USA
Now Now, Sydney, NSW

1998

String Em Up!, Rotterdam, Netherlands.
Exiles, Berlin, Germany

1996-97-2002-05

EAR stage Big Day Out, Sydney, NSW

1995-96-97-98-2000-01

What Is Music?, Sydney / Melbourne, NSW / Victoria

Selected Collaborations

2006

Anthony Pateras, Make It Up Club (Fringe Festival), Melbourne,
Victoria

2005

Maja Ratkje, Oslo, Norway

Jon Roses' Panikken (Melbourne Festival), Melbourne, Victoria

Robin Fox, Ding Dong Dang, Melbourne, Victoria

Alex Davies, Lanfranchis, Sydney, NSW

2003

Chris Abrahams, Oren Ambarchi, Dr Martin Ng, Robin Fox, Now Now,
Sydney, NSW

2000

Oren Ambarchi, Robbie Avenaim, Dr Martin Ng, Dave Grohl & Curse Ov
Dialect (performing as Testicle Candy) Big Day Out, Melbourne,
Victoria.

1999

Yamatsuka Eye, Noise Ramones Remixes, Sydney, NSW

1998

Otomo Yoshihide, Bob Ostertag, Jon Rose, String Em Up, Rotterdam,
Netherlands.

Flaming Lips, Peel Session, BBC Studios, London, England

Masami Akita (Merzbow), Tokyo, Japan

Discography

Cicatrix; CD Album, Sweatlung Recordings, Australia (2007)
Live in Seoul, 7" Single, 8mm Recordings, Italy (2007)
Live in School, 7" Single, Load Records, USA (2007)
Live in Beirut, 7" Single, Chondritic Sound, USA (2005)
Live in Lisboa, 7" Single, Freedom From, USA (2005)
Live in Germany, 8" Single, dualpLOVER, Australia (2005)

Selected Pre-Justice Discography.

DJ Smallcock: Yinyue, CD, dualpLOVER, Australia (2000)
Peeled Hearts Paste: Plover Brand, CD, dualpLOVER, Australia (1997)
A Kombi: Music to Drive-by, dualpLOVER, Australia (1994)

LINKS.

www.dualplover.com/justice.htm
www.myspace.com/justiceyeldham
www.dualplover.com
www.myspace.com/dualplover

IMAGES.

http://farm1.static.flickr.com/159/435011242_df1f5afb86_o.jpg
http://farm1.static.flickr.com/152/435010938_d630c2d199_o.jpg
http://farm1.static.flickr.com/147/435012145_dfe09c851e_o.jpg
http://farm2.static.flickr.com/1070/968195444_aacebd2b5f_o.jpg

Submitted by Gary Ferrington
gferrington@gmail.com