

ENRIC PALAU is co-director, co-founder and head of programming at Sónar, Barcelona's cool electronic- and advanced-music festival. Together with his partners, Sergio Caballero and Ricard Robles, Palau founded Sónar in 1994, and it has helped make the careers of artists such as M.I.A. and Sven Väth. Sónar also tours, with satellite festivals around the world, from Chicago to São Paulo. For *Scalpel*, Palau showed his true eclectic form.

5 / 9 MUSIC



MUSIC 5 / 9

First up, he picked **The Bad Light**, a Santa Cruz-based band with the tattoo artist Edu Cerro on guitar and Emily Pegoda on vocals. Their sound is fuzzy, bluesy, heavy and slow, mixing elements of the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion with old-school funky drummer rhythms. Cerro started the band after a few years of jamming and they released *Marrow of Sound* in 2012. The follow-up – *Onward Downward* – finds Pegoda adding melodic vocals to the stomping sludge beneath. The Santa Cruz surfer scene loves them and the indie blogs are just picking them up.

Next up, Palau switched worlds for us. **Francesco Tristano** is a Luxembourg-born pianist who now lives in Barcelona. He has studied at New York's Juilliard School and, in the classical world, is a Baroque specialist, bringing concert audiences to their feet with renditions of Ravel and Prokofiev. But Tristano's fingers can get funky, too. In the dance world, his collaborations with the techno pioneers Carl Craig and Moritz von Oswald have produced fabulous live shows and offered another side to his playing. He's putting classical, dance and experimental music in a context all of his own. "Bach is techno, but Bach is also free, and techno is also free," he explains. "Whenever we label something, it's not a limitation. It's an invitation to open it up."

The LA-based **Clipping** are way less delicate. The rap threesome offers a brutal mix of feel-good, party-centric hip-hop, and feel-bad, eardrum-punishing noise. Featuring Jonathan Snipes of Captain Ahab and William Hutson (aka Rale) on electronics, with the rapper Daveed Diggs fronting, the band produces a sound unlike anything else in hip-hop. Diggs raps with precise, clean phrasing laid down over industrial-sounding noise. Imagine Jay-Z recording in late-1970s Berlin. Their debut release, *Midcity*, was voted "the first necessary album of 2013" by *The Guardian* when it came out back in February.

Sticking with the genre-bending theme, Palau chose **Carsten Nicolai**, a German musician who performs and records under the stage names Alva Noto, Noto, and Aleph-1. Nicolai was born in the GDR, and studied architecture and landscape design before moving into art, then music, in the early 1990s, after being attracted by the physics of sound. As a result, his early work was almost mathematical, using primary sound waves and samples to record tracks such as 2008's *Uni Asymmetric Noises*. He has been expanding his output: he recently wrote an opera, *Sparkie: Cage and Beyond*, with Michael Nyman, and tours with the Japanese electronica legend, Ryuichi Sakamoto.

Finally, Palau jumped across America to Miami for **Otto von Schirach**, who describes himself as a "half Cuban Native Indian, half German Anunnaki wolf", making what he calls "Miami bass booty drop/top-weirdo waltz". He grew up with a white-witch grandmother, listening to Miami bass, gangsta rap and Afro-Cuban noise. In 1991, he bought his first drum machine from a local crackhead, and has since been jumping genres, mixing surf-punk rock, sexy house, deep grime and wobbly dubstep. He has also worked in movies, appearing in a short film, *Otto and the Electric Eel*, which made the festival circuit in 2012.



Above:
Band logo.

THE BAD LIGHT

"I bought their album Marrow of Sound, at a store in Santa Cruz, had a superficial listen, and fell in love with the cover. While paying, I asked the cashier about their music, and she told me they were a local band that had played in the store last week. Organic and pure blues rock with an analogue sound that really captivates me." EP



Above:
Marrow of Sound album cover, 2012.

THE BAD LIGHT

Opposite:
Edu Cerro, The Bad Light member. Image by Ashley Webber.





FRANCESCO TRISTANO

“One of the greatest piano players, and the youngest to do the Goldberg Variations, Tristano is a natural-born talent of the exceptional kind. He’s a skilled mixer of classical music with techno scores. What makes his incursion into electronica so well crafted is his exceptional classical skill and knowledge. It’s just a matter of time until he’s a huge star.” EP

79

FRANCESCO TRISTANO



Opposite:

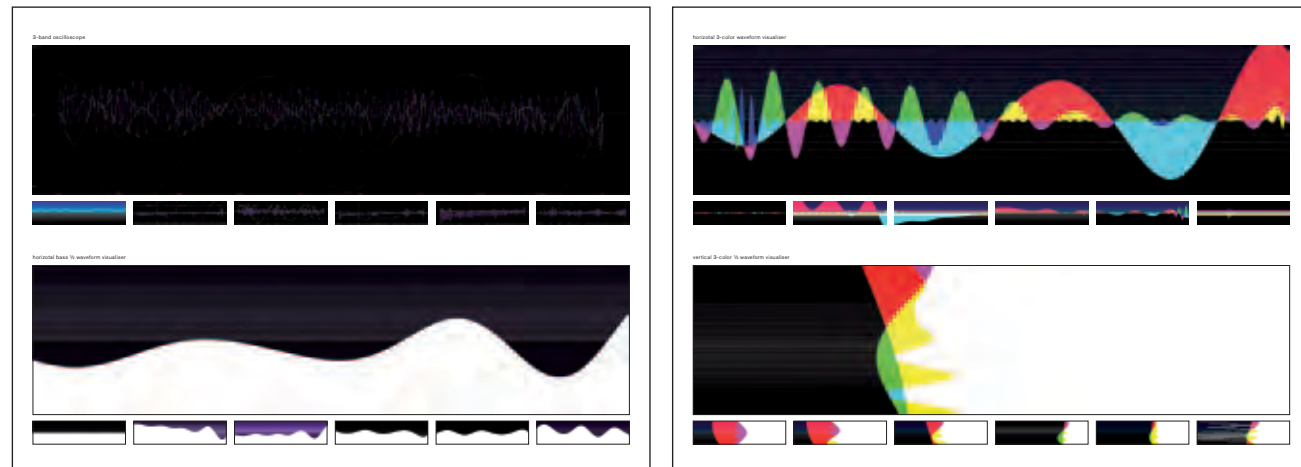
Francesco Tristano.
Image by Maie Stattgat.



This page from top:

not for piano LP, 2007.
Artwork by GAMNBCN.com;

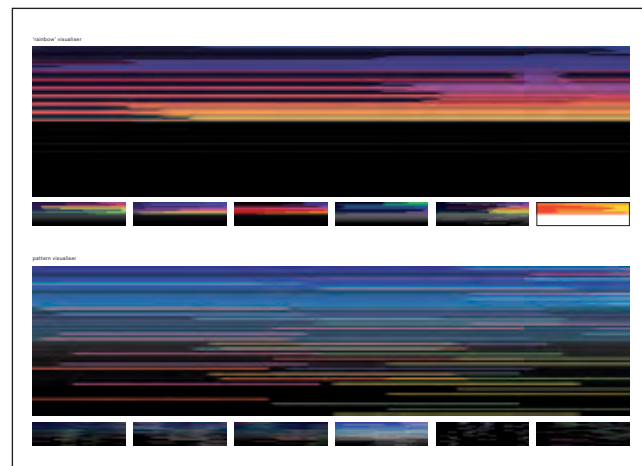
bachCage LP, 2011.



CARSTEN NICOLAI

“Carsten plays Sónar under his alias, Alva Noto. His latest project, Diamond Version – in collaboration with Byetone – is quietly becoming one of the most outstanding live shows around. He combines versatility and good taste with musical and visual minimalism.” EP

All images from *Univrs Uniscope* booklet, 2011.

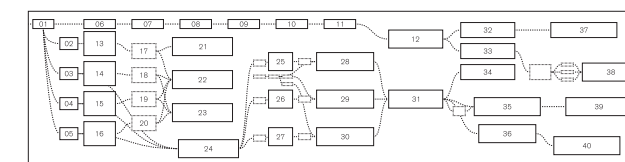
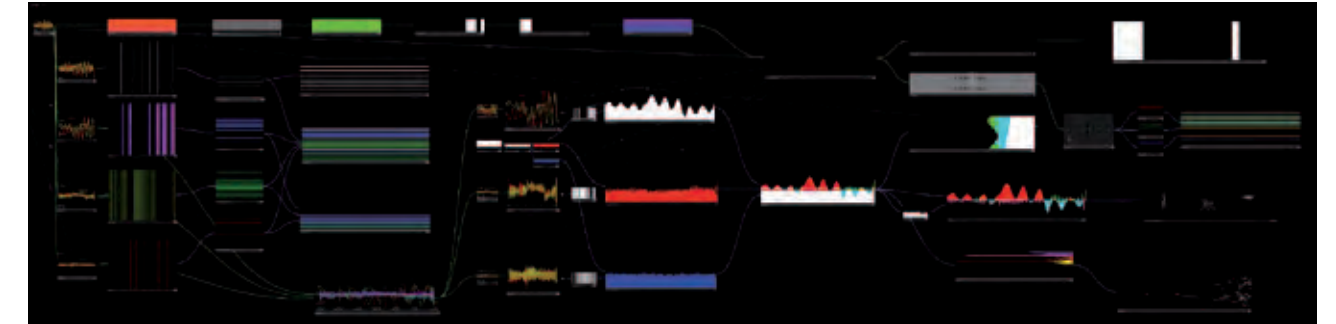


CARSTEN NICOLAI

ALVA NOTO . UNIVRS UNISCOPE

the visualisation of *univrs (uniscope version)* combines a variety of modules – each demonstrating a different method of audio analysing, such as rainbow / static waves / cascade / pattern / colour waveform / oscillator modes, etc. – to an overall relay structure. the inspiration for the *univrs (uniscope version)* is derived from a series of former works implementing audio-visual strategies in both black & white and colour: *telefunken* (2000), *telefunken anti* (2004), *telefunken vtc* (2004) and *univxt* (2008) each visualise sound by means of transforming the audio waveform into a horizontal line pattern.

uniscope – overview



- 01 audio in
- 02 sum
- 03 low
- 04 mid
- 05 hi
- 06 pattern 1
- 07 pattern 1
- 08 pattern 2
- 09 pattern 3
- 10 pattern 4

- 11 pattern 5
- 12 pattern summation
- 13 waveform translator telefunken
- 14 waveform translator telefunken purple
- 15 waveform translator telefunken green
- 16 waveform translator telefunken red
- 17 separation white
- 18 separation blue
- 19 separation green
- 20 separation red
- 21 black / white
- 22 rgb + white
- 23 rgb
- 24 3-band oscilloscope
- 25 1-band oscilloscope low
- 26 1-band oscilloscope mid
- 27 1-band oscilloscope hi
- 28 low/white horizontal 1/2 waveform
- 29 mid/red horizontal 1/2 waveform
- 30 hi/blue horizontal 1/2 waveform
- 31 3-color horizontal 1/2 waveform
- 32 low frequency power
- 33 rms display
- 34 vertical 1/2 waveform
- 35 3-color horizontal waveform
- 36 rainbow analysis
- 37 pattern monitor
- 38 static stripe analysis
- 39 3xxy scope
- 40 cascade analysis

uniscope + pattern + 'telefunken' visualiser



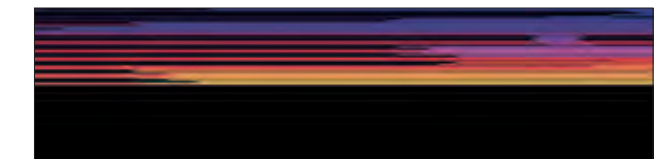
vertical 3-color 1/2 waveform visualiser



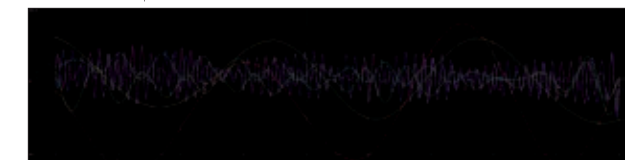
digital 'telefunken' RGB visualiser



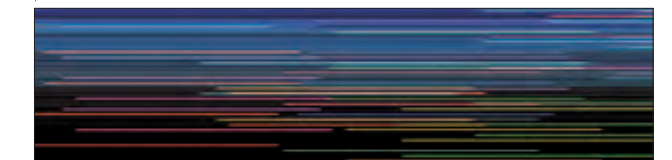
'rainbow' visualiser



3-band oscilloscope



pattern visualiser



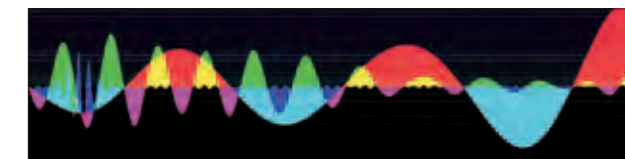
horizontal bass 1/2 waveform visualiser



analog 'telefunken' visualiser



horizontal 3-color waveform visualiser



'cascade' visualiser



"This was love at first listen. I felt I was hearing the noisiness of Merzbow mixed with the lyricism of The Last Poets. Midcity is my latest discovery." EP

82

Music

83

CLIPPING



Above image by Cristopher Cichocki.
Opposite image by Sarah Sitkin.

CLIPPING



Images by Sarah Sitkin.

OTTO VON SCHIRACH

85

OTTO VON SCHIRACH



"Cuba and Germany filtered by humour, provocation, IDM and breakcore. A real artist with a sense of fun, which spreads all over his work. He's reinventing the new Hispanic sounds of Miami, and his collaboration with Modeselektor, Evil Twin, is the track of the year." EP