

Zero Kama, Nekrophile Rekords and the Occult Underground of the Postindustrial Era

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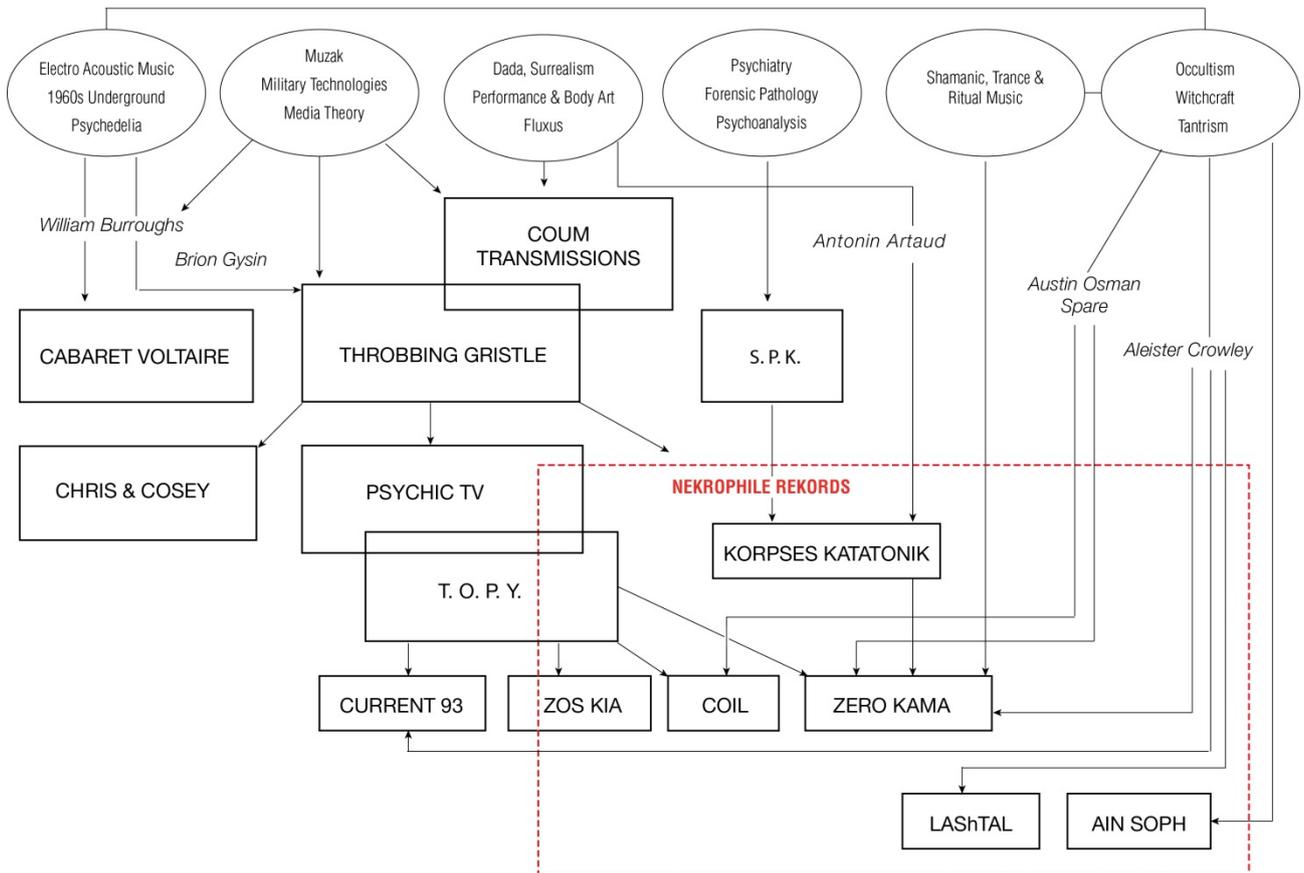
In 1983 Zoe DeWitt founded the cassette label Nekrophile Rekords, on which during the following years in a marginal number of releases recordings the most important protagonists of the industrial subgenre 'ritual' or 'ritual industrial' were published. Besides blueprints for the music of Psychic TV by Genesis P-Orridge and Stan Bingo, the first releases by Coil (John Balance and Peter Christopherson) these included also Zoe's own projects Korpses Katatonik and particularly Zero Kama, whose album 'The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.' – recorded exclusively with instruments made from human bones and skulls – is regarded as one of the key albums of this genre. Zoe will talk in this lecture about her own activities within the underground of industrial music in the 1980s, present audio examples and hitherto unpublished foto material, as well as shed some light on the involved theoretical and occult implications of this musical subculture.

Hello and welcome everybody! I'm Zoe DeWitt and I will talk in this lecture about two music projects I did in the 1980s, which were Zero Kama and the previous project Korpses Katatonik, and I will also talk about the cassette label Nekrophile Rekords on which these projects were originally published. Especially Zero Kama's album *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* is - besides some other recordings by SPK and Current 93 - commonly regarded as a key album for the genre 'ritual' or 'ritual industrial', and it is this subgenre of Industrial or better to say Post-Industrial that most recordings on Nekrophile Rekords could be attributed to.

In the above diagram I have tried to outline a structural scheme that shows the position of Nekrophile Rekords and its featured bands in relation to the main industrial projects like Throbbing Gristle, Cabaret Voltaire and SPK. Nekrophile Rekords was founded in 1983 - this was a time when Throbbing already had broken up and their follow-up project Psychic TV was in a beginning phase. Many of the bands and musicians on Nekrophile Rekords came from the surroundings of Psychic TV or were somehow related to them. Moreover, the step from Throbbing Gristle to Psychic TV was marked by a general shift of themes and the musical style – instead of martial electronics and the use of irritating images an influence of magic and occultism became predominant which was accompanied by a more calm and meditative style of music. This changes – one could say – marked to transition from Industrial to postindustrial and led to the

emergence of a ritual form of industrial music. This is – more or less – the main background from which Nekrophile Rekords developed.

NEKROPHILE REKORDS and the Genealogy of Ritual Industrial



Before I go deeper into the subject of ritual industrial and its relevant projects I would like to give a short survey on the ‘classic’ form of industrial and some of its influences as far as they seem at least from my point of view important for the development of the musical underground in the 1980s.

The most influential band in the development of Industrial music was of course Throbbing Gristle. They existed in their original manifestation from 1976 till 1981 and had originally developed out of an art context, namely the extreme performance and body art project COUM TRANSMISSIONS.

The COUM members Genesis P-Orridge and Cosey Fanni Tutti, who worked during that time also as a porn actress (of for example Lasse Braun videos) were later accompanied by Peter ‘Sleazy’ Christopherson, a theatre designer and programmer, and Chris Carter, who had some experience with synthesizers and light shows. The performances of COUM TRANSMISSION were designated to breach any conventional taboo within the art world – as for example by live bdsm performances including blood, urine and the exhibition

of used tampons while showing hardcore sex and fistfucking videos. In a sense their performances went into a similar direction as those of Viennese Actionists like Mühl, Brus, Nitsch and Schwarzkogler. In order to reach a wider audience the members of Coum Transmissions carried the disturbing approach of their performances into the field of experimental music and formed the band Throbbing Gristle.

Although some of their musical influences can be traced – from the 1960s psychedelic underground, early electronic music and even the first steps in electric fusion Jazz that were done by Miles Davis around 1970 – their newly created style was more a radical break with all musical conventions than a continuation of them. The sounds of Throbbing Gristle were harsh, yet sometimes also calm and hypnotic electronics, as it had not been heard before. Their songs dealt with Zyklon B or the murders of the Manson family, and in their logo and martial outfits they appropriated a kind of fascist aesthetics, which sometimes made it difficult to decide whether it was meant critical or in favour of totalitarian social systems. Although this attitude was obviously used as a subversive strategy, some other protagonists of industrial and postindustrial styles were still more indifferent to that point and expressed open sympathy for nationalist and right wing positions. To my mind this issue is still not yet fully worked up, as the borders between critical subversion and affirmation are fluent and thus open up to a wide field of doubtful appropriations that sometimes are – at least in my opinion – too easily justified as simply being art or music.

Derived from the name of their label Industrial Records and its slogan “Industrial music for industrial people” they established with their new and powerful style the genre Industrial, to which besides Throbbing Gristle a few other bands – like SPK and Cabaret Voltaire – could be assigned. A common feature of them was the combination of aggressive or threatening electronic sounds with shocking or provocative contents, by which they created a kind of subversive aesthetics that could be seen as a radical application of William Burroughs’ ideas on information warfare as outlined in his essay *The Electronic Revolution*. In this text Burroughs developed the idea to use cut-ups of sound recordings as a subversive weapon against repressive institutions. Another important influence for Throbbing Gristle came from the American painter Brion Gysin, who invented the dream machine, a rotating cylinder that was designed to induce trance states by flickering light impulses. Brion Gysin by the way was named by Genesis P-Orridge also as his tutor in the field of magicⁱ. This point is insofar of interest as it shows that there was already in the early times of Coum Transmissions an inclination of Genesis P-Orridge towards magic and occultismⁱⁱ. Whether it was Burroughs, Gysin, Charles Manson or the sect leader Jim Jones, who committed with 900 of his followers a mass suicide in 1978, all these personal obsessions and interests of Genesis P-Orridge finally became the leading images connected with Industrial and were reproduced within this subculture in a quite stereotypical way as codes and icons of identification for followers and fans. Although the use of irritating images was partly still intended to be shocking in the work of Coum Transmission, their general role within industrial culture could also be seen as a strategy to face the negative contents of a society, and thus to make their suppressed energy available to the individual by a conscious acknowledgement .

For other bands, like S.P.K., whose work was concerned with psychiatry, pathology and forensic sciences, different theoretical influences were important. As S.P.K.'s founding member Graeme Revell wrote to me in a letter from 1983, he had spent one year in Paris studying and attending the lectures of Baudrillard, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Lyotard and others which to him had been a great source of inspiration and much more influential than any musical groupsⁱⁱⁱ. At least to me there was still one more important influence, which were Antonin Artaud's ideas on the Theatre of Cruelty' – a direct actionist form of theatre that was aimed at intense bodily experiences and implied the use of cacophonous music, screams and ritualistic elements of expression. Both the performance art of the 1960s and 70s as well as the industrial culture that was developed out of it could be seen as manifestations of such ideas.

Somehow at this point my own process of getting into contact with the underground of industrial music began. At the age of 19, when bands like TG and Cabaret Voltaire were already my favourites, I wrote a small book with notes that were mainly influenced by Artaud and the writings of his German translator Bernd Mattheus. It was printed shortly afterwards by a Viennese publisher who introduced me to an underground network, which was mainly based on postal exchange and tightly connected with the subculture of industrial music. This underground network had originally developed out of contacts within the mail art and fluxus scene that been utilised by Genesis P-Orridge in the early 1970s to promote the activities of Coum Transmissions. There was a flourishing exchange of underground zines, newsletters, music cassettes and records on vinyl, that were – apart from the established music industry - distributed by alternative mail order companies.

During that time, it was around 1982, it happened that a girlfriend suggested to me that I should take less drugs and instead do something useful with my energies. As a consequence I bought a used Korg MS20 synthesizer which I later supplemented it by a SQ10 analogue sequencer and started to make my first tracks of electronic music. At the same time I started to study electro acoustic music at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna under Dieter Kaufmann, an Austrian composer of electro acoustic music. Besides some insights into the tradition of electroacoustic music in the 20th century the most important thing we learned there was how to edit audio tapes and make tape loops, a technique that I used both for Korpses Katatonik as well as for Zero Kama. Another big advantage of this course was that we could use two small studios under the roof of the beautiful Wiener Konzerthaus, which enabled me to combine the single tracks that I could record at home to multi-track compositions. For these first tracks I used my synth and sequencer, a guitar, two effect pedals and a revox tape machine for loops and analogue echo effects. In April 1983 I finally published my first collection of recordings under the Name of Korpses Katatonik by producing a cassette edition of – I think – 200 copies.

As the name of the label I decided to use Nekrophile Rekords – which for me seemed to match perfectly

with the dark and sinister atmosphere of this recording. The title of the cassette "*Subklinikal Leutomy Aphrenia Spasmophilik Lyssophobo Asphyxia Sinister Lethal Anorex*" indicated already in some ironical way that the whole album was strongly influenced by SPK (which was – depending on the respective publications – used as an abbreviation for *System Planning Korporation, Surgical Penis Klinik* oder *Sozialistisches Patientenkollektiv*). This game with an abbreviation Korpses Katatonik repeated with the letters S.L.A. (referring the *Symbionist Liberation Army*, an American terrorist group of the 1970s) which appear in the title and other inscriptions of the cassette.

From this first cassette of Nekrophile Rekords I will now play extracts from the tracks nekom, kcock, transzplant, Skarzisko and Okzypital slash.

In order to promote my cassette release I produced a small number of newsletters which were spread within the mentioned underground network. In this newsletters I developed a kind of philosophy for Nekrophile Rekords which better could be described as delirious writings comprising the fields of mental disease, oppression by restrictive state apparatuses and the fight for liberation the individual's will by a subversive use of noise and music. To break these writings down to a more understandable formula, I would say that their general idea was that it is a political act to face the negative and suppressed contents of a society. This could have an emancipatory effect on the individual and the way to achieve this goal was by music which deals with this suppressed and negative contents. Besides these writings I also had this sticker printed which showed the Nekrophile logo and reverted the slogan of the music industry "Home taping is killing music" which should people keep off from copying vinyl records unto music cassettes.

By my contacts within the mentioned underground network I heard of a recording by Throbbing Gristle which had not been published until that time. It was entitled "What's History" and existed only in a very few private copies that were circulated within that network. I had the idea to publish this recording as the second release on Nekrophile Rekords and wrote to Genesis P-Orridge, who agreed with the publication yet told me that it was in fact not a recording by TG but rather done by himself and Stan Bingo, a close associate who had a band called Last Few Days. The recording was intended as a blueprint for the soundtrack of Derek Jarman's film *In the Shadow of the Sun*, as well as a blueprint for the music of Psychic TV in general. As I was informed the recording of this single 40 minutes track took place in Genesis' bedroom, and the date of the recording was the 14th of January 1981.

The mentioned date of January 1981 is insofar interesting as this was still before the split of TG who played their last concert in May 1981. It thus shows that Genesis P-Orridge was already at that time thinking about and working on a follow-up project. After the breakup of TG, which according to Cosey was caused by a personal breakup between Genesis and herself, P-Orridge and Christopherson founded Psychic TV while Tutti and Carter continued their musical collaboration as Chris and Cosey. Compared with Throbbing

Gristle the emergence of Psychic TV brought a significant shift both regarding the musical style and the featured themes, so that one could say that this development marked the transition from industrial to post-industrial: While TG had mainly worked with electronic sounds – or at least electronically modified sounds of traditional instruments – there were on the first LP of Psychic TV lovely songs accompanied by acoustic guitar, string arrangements or tracks reminiscent of Ennio Morricone's western soundtracks. Besides that an influence of occultism and magic became predominant.

Psychic TV presented themselves not as a band, but rather as the propaganda arm of the Temple of Psychic Youth (short TOPY), a sect-like cult which had as its symbol a three-barred cross and whose members performed simultaneously a sex magic ritual on the 23rd of each month in order to make some personal wish come true. This magical practice was based loosely on the writings of Austin Osman Spare, an English artist and occultist of the first half of the 20th century. In his writings Spare devised a kind of psycho-linguistic sorcery which usually is called sigil magic. Sigils were gained by formulating a wish and combining the letters of the sentence to a simple glyph so that its meaning escapes the conscious mind. By concentrating on such sigils in trance states or during an orgasm according to Spare the content of the wish could be transmitted to the unconscious and thus effect its fulfilment. This use of magic and other elements that somehow characterized the style of activities within the Temple of Psychic Youth could be regarded as a modern form of Tantrism, an ancient Indian system of philosophy, that included – at least in its left hand form called *Vama Marga* - the ritual use of negative and otherwise tabooed elements like sexuality, death and sorcery as a means for spiritual development.

Members of the Temple of Psychic Youth as well as temporarily musicians of Psychic TV were besides the founding members John Balance, David Tibet and the singer of Soft Cell, Marc Almond. To the irritation of my friends who had considered myself being more reasonable and critical, I became too a member of the Temple in the winter of 1983/84 yet didn't stay for very long as the cult, which originally had claimed to be aimed at the emancipation of the individual, soon seemed to repeat the authoritarian structures of other sect-like communities. Nevertheless this short association gave the impetus towards my second musical project Zero Kama and besides that also led to an extensive pen friendship with John Balance, which started when he was my main contact person within TOPY. Our letter exchange mainly took place from 1983 to 1985 and thus covered exactly the period when John developed his project Coil and I created my own project Zero Kama.

This background was the reason that the first ever published Coil track was released in 1983 on the third Nekrophile cassette, which was a compilation entitled *The Beast 666*, dedicated to Aleister Crowley, the infamous occultist and icon of 20th century magic. On the same compilation was also the first track of Zero Kama, for which I had combined the chants of Tibetan monks with the sounds of small cymbals and a rat cage that was used as a percussion instrument.

I'm going to play now this first ever published track by Coil with the title "Here to Here (double headed secret)" and after that an extract from the first track by Zero Kama entitled V.V.V.V.V. which was the abbreviation of one of the magical names of Aleister Crowley. Both tracks from The Beast 666 compilation, published in 1983 on Nekrophile Rekords.

The Beast 666 compilation was followed in early 1984 by the first full album of Coil, released as the forth cassette published on Nekrophile Rekords. This release, which still comes before the first vinyl release by Coil, was entitled *Transparent*, which was a reference to Austin Osman Spare as his name was hidden in this title. The cover drawing was also by Spare, taken from a magical Stele that was made for Kenneth Grant in the 1950s, depicting the Babylonian Goddess Tiamat. The cassette included on one side the first recorded tracks by Coil, and on the other side a live recording from Berlin Atonal Festival in 1983 where John Balance played with John Gosling and Min, two other TOPY members, under the name of Zos Kia. The material of this live recording was mainly supplied by Coil, yet Zos Kia – by the way the name of the magical system of Austin Osman Spare - was used by John Gosling as his band name, so the tape was finally published under the split authorship Coil/Zos Kia, which necessarily led to some conflict when John Balance and Sleazy left The Temple of Psychic Youth later in that year.

During that time John Balance also started to collect drawings of Austin Spare, while I translated Spares Collected Writings into German a few years later. Coil become during the following two decades one of the most innovative and well known experimental electronic bands which produced a great number of singles and albums, until John Balance finally died in 2004 after a fall from the 2nd floor of his house in London. Six years later also Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson died in his sleep, so that Coil was history forever. Although I never met him in person, for me John Balance always had been a kind of twin or soul brother with whom I felt deeply connected, based upon our simultaneous musical beginnings, our pen-friendship as well as our shared interests, especially in the art and magic of Austin Osman Spare.

Soon after the release of the Coil tape I started to work on my own project as I wanted to record an album by Zero Kama. The first inspiration to this project came through a track on the bonus LP of the first Psychic TV album *Force the Hand of Chance*. Its first edition was supplemented by a bonus LP called *Psychic TV Themes*, which was designed as ritual music for magical workings. On it there was a track entitled *23 Tibetan Human Tigh Bones*, which was recorded with the traditional Tibetan bone instruments that were said to be made from monks, virgins or executed criminals. Based on this track I had the idea not only to make music with human tigh bones, but to furnish a variety of instruments from human bones and skulls and to make music with it. After having been told by a friend about an beautiful gothic, yet unlocked charnel house within the cemetery of a small village in Lower Austria, I went there on a sunny spring day, took what I needed and came back in the evening with two large travel bags containing nine skulls and a great number of other bones. It was a very strange feeling to share my flat from now on with the remains

of dozens of deceased human beings, and quite often I had the impression, that they were not simply dead matter but still had somehow parts of their respective souls attached to them. I should add that these bones did not look like the prepared and bleached bones and skulls that we know from anatomical collections, but were often dark, brown or green spotted, and some of the skulls had still remains of hair on their surface. Moreover, when I started to saw them up I had to realize that this produced a very ugly smell which was really hard to bear. At this point I also realized that I had transgressed fundamental limits, not only of good taste, but also of what humans in general regard as ethically acceptable. Yet I was at a point of no return and so started to build my instruments: By sawing off the hip joints and drilling the knee joints of thigh bones I made trumpets following the Tibetan example. From skulls the caps were sawn off and by covering them with sheep skin I got my first skull drums. From a shank bone I made a flute and by adding the mouthpiece of an oboe to a thigh bone combined with an ell I made further wind instruments. By filling the left over skullcaps with finger bones I got rattles, and a bone with scores served as a kind of guiro. Finally by fixing a row of thigh bones of different length on a wooden box I created a simple xylophone. Some of the instruments were decorated with serpents skin and metal, others painted, but most of them were left blank as they were.

When the building of the instruments was finished, also the spooky atmosphere in my flat had disappeared, so as if it had been banned by the working process and transformed into something new. So I could start to record with my bizarre instruments the first simple audio tracks, which went quite well so far. As recording devices I had a 4-track cassette recorder and mixing desk, as well as a revox tape machine, which enabled me to play loops and create analogue echo effects. By using the different speed settings I also could play some recorded tracks in half speed which sometimes gave the dry bone sounds a deeper resonance. For the required rhythm tracks in most cases two or three cycles were enough to create a loop. In general the instruments worked quite well, at least as far as I needed it to make some primitive music. Moreover some of the tracks sounded very similar to the music I was inspired by, be it Tibetan ritual music or Arabic beduin music, as for example the famous *Pipes of Pan at Joujuka*, that was produced by Brian Jones in 1968. The whole recording took place in the living room of my small flat in the 9th district of Vienna, which you can see here. In less than three weeks I had enough material for my planned album, which I published in September 1984 as the fifth cassette release on Nekrophile Rekords under the title "The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H..

From this cassette I will play now extracts from the tracks Atavism Dream, Night of Matter, Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome, Love Always Yieldeth and Azure lidded Women (pregnant womb of Non)

Regarding the title The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H. and the symbolism connected with it: Members of the Temple of Psychic Youth received when being affiliated in the cult a stereotype name which consisted of Kali for female and Eden for male members combined with a number that presumably was chosen after der

order of admission. When I affiliated myself to the cult in January 1984 I received the name Eden 77, which obviously was a very powerful number, as it seemed to have by the double occurrence of the magical seven a very special occult flair. According to cabalistic numerology, which was one of my fields of interest at that time, 77 was the numerical value of the arab word and forname *laylah*, which meant night, and also that of the Hebrew word *oz* which meant “a he-goat” – suggestive of the Christian devil, and in occult terms a symbol of the unrestrained creative force of nature. This idea is also reflected in the Zero Kama logo, which is made out of the symbol of an eye and a sword, which are the meanings of the Hebrew letters O and Z, adding again up to oz, the he-goat. Around this symbolism I constructed the whole theme of the album, and its title *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* thus referred to the cosmic unity of the two basic opposite forces within nature – night, death and dissolution into nothingness, and the unrestrained sexual force of creation as its counterbalance that emerges from it and overcomes all eternal decay. In this respect the recording was for me also a kind of alchemical act in which the cruelty of death was transformed into an immaterial manifestation of beauty in the form of music.

This opinion was of course not shared by everyone: I remember for example the final exam at the University course for electro acoustic music in Vienna where for the first time also the head of the institute, the composer Roman Haubenstock-Ramati was present. After Dieter Kaufmann had presented some tracks of my work and explained the construction of the instruments to him, Haubenstock-Ramati turned away in disgust and said that he never had heard something more nauseating – which perhaps can be seen as a kind of compliment too.

By the way shortly after the release of *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* the musicians of a band with whom I had been in contact, it was Metgumbnerbone from Newcastle Upon Tyne, also tried to get some bones from their local cemetery, but had been less successful as they were caught by the police and sentenced to do some social service in the following year - as can be seen from these newspaper cuttings.

One year later I was invited by the NL-Centrum Amsterdam to do two live performances of Zero Kama in the Netherlands. As it was not really possible to use the bone instruments for a live gig, I asked some friends, and friends of friends, to support me in these concerts with traditional instruments as drums, bass and guitar. Our program included also some kind of performance parts involving bdsm-actions and the use of animal blood which I had ordered from the organizers of the concerts. In these performance parts there can be found an obvious influence of Viennese Actionism which is due to the fact that I had participated only a few months after recording *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* in the “three days game” of Hermann Nitsch’s *Orgies Mysteries Theater*.

I will play a passage from the concert in Arnhem – it has been released on CD in 2008 – and show you some fotos made in Amsterdam and Arnhem, which were until today the only public appearances of Zero Kama.

My co-musicians were Muki Pakesch, with whom I had attended the ELAK-course at the music academy as well the three days Nitsch action, Didi Neidhart, who is now quite well known as musician, dj and music journalist, as well as my girlfriend of that time, David Aranyos. Wolfgang Lehner, an Austrian director of photography, projected super-8-films which were intended to be used in a Zero Kama video project, and the mixing was done by Martin Wich a.k.a. Das Viech, a Viennese punk legend who unfortunately had passed away some years later. There was a kind of balance between persons who were able to play music instruments and others that had almost no experience in this field, so that the music of these concerts had a somehow improvised and ad hoc character as it was developed only for the purpose of these gigs. Before that I will play part of a short interview with Zero Kama that was produced by Radio Stad Amsterdam on occasion of these concerts.

Also in 1985 I published on a second compilation with the opulent title *The Archangels of Sex rule the Destruction of the Regime*, including tracks by Zero Kama, Sleepchamber, Ain Soph and Metgumbnerbone. In 1986 two albums by Italian ritual projects followed. The first one was Thoum Aesh Neith by LASH TAL and the second one was *Ars Regia* by Ain Soph, which was the last cassette release to be published on Nekrophile Rekords. During that time I also recorded the last track by Zero Kama, which was based on a verse of Aleister Crowley's main book, the Book of the Law or Liber Al vel Legis. It was published on a double LP Compilation entitled Q.E.D. by the NL Centrum Amsterdam in 1988. Besides Zero Kama this compilation included tracks by most other artists that had performed in the NL Centrum, including S.P.K., Chris and Cosey, Z'ev, Einstürzende Neubauten, Laibach, and - also from Austria - Konrad Becker of Monoton. This last Zero Kama track sounded like this:

At the same time the French label Permis de construire asked to produce a vinyl version of *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.*, which was too released in 1988. Despite of this first vinyl releases I had the feeling that didn't make much sense to continue making music as Zero Kama. One reason was that I was not able to create the same sublime music as on *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* when playing with other musicians or in a live situation. If on the other hand I would have continued as a solo musician I would have been condemned to repeat and copy myself. So I came to the conclusion that I could do nothing better than I already had done and decided to stop making music at all. The plan to set the whole text of Crowley's *Liber Al vel Legis* to music was abandoned, and in the same way the work on a video for *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H. by me and Wolfgang Lehner* remained unfinished. The super 8 material we had already recorded for it, containing lots of ritualistic and sexual explicit images that were taken in my small apartment, have – unfortunately or not – not survived.

In 1990 I gave most of the instruments away and kept only two. In the same year I sold all master tapes and the name Nekrophile Rekords to Staaplaat in Amsterdam. They continued to publish the Nekrophile releases on CD during the early 1990s, mostly with randomly placed artwork and inscriptions as can be

seen on the What's History CD which had the Spare artwork of the Coil cassette on it. The two compilations were re-released on one CD and four tracks, including the first Coil track, were omitted. According to the cover notes, there was a European branch of Nekrophile Rekords in Amsterdam, and a US department in Portland, Oregon.

In the late 1980s I withdrew more and more in my private life as well as into a more intense study of occultism. At that time some of the people who were interested in occultism and magic during the TOPY times became involved in Chaos Magic and the rise of another occult organisation, the Illuminates of Thanateros (I.O.T.). It had as its members again me and John Balance, whose magical name was then Frater Loci, which was an anagram of his band name Coil. Finally I distanced myself more and more from occultism, both from Aleister Crowley's system, which still had been a source of inspiration in the beginnings of Nekrophile Rekords, as well as later from Chaos Magic, which too seemed to be based on fundamental misconceptions. Nevertheless very important for my own thinking remained the writings of Austin Osman Spare, which I translated in 1989 and finally published in 1990. After some years of publishing books I realized that I still have somehow to express myself and started to work as a fine artist. Besides I started to write again and develop my own theories on how we create reality by our own unconscious conceptions, which still were based on my experiences in the field of magic, but which I now tried to express in a philosophical context. I still try to communicate this philosophy in my lecture performances and sometimes – this I had to realize when preparing this lecture – I still revolve around points which I was already talking about in the earliest writings published by Nekrophile Rekords.

Although it was not the least my intention, the years of reclusiveness still enhanced the mysterious image of Zero Kama, and also created a kind of schizophrenic situation: Whereas I started to live a private life in the Austrian alps where no one knew something about my previous musical activities, those people all around the world who knew my work did not know anything of the person behind it. This somehow lasted until the emergence of social media like Myspace and Facebook, which brought these separate parts together again. When I had my first look at Myspace I realized that there was a huge fan community of Zero Kama with many hundred followers, and this finally made it possible to get in contact with some of these persons, communicate with them or realize some collaborative projects. This situation also led to some re-releases and new publications: In 2001 the French label Athanor published a 10" vinyl, *The Goatherd and the Beast - Collected Tracks 1983 – 1986*, which united all Zero Kama tracks that were recorded besides *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* In 2008 followed *Live in Arnhem*, the recording of one of the concerts from 1985, and one year ago, in 2014 a digitally remastered version of *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* was released in red vinyl. Additionally in 2012 all recordings of Korpses Katatonik were re-released under the title *Oeuvres Complètes* on the Viennese Klanggalerie label. Also in 2012 Buh Records from Lima Peru published under the title *Return to Laylah – Tribute to Zero Kama* a compilation CD with 16 international bands who were

inspired by Zero Kama or followed paths of ritual music which I had stricken in the past. This was really a cool acknowledgement of my work, of which I'm very proud, and I will now play some tracks out of this wonderful compilation. The first track is by Brayan Buckt from Peru, the second from Vlubä, Argentina and the third one by Z'ev, the well known percussionist and sound artist from the USA, who plays here to a distorted Zero Kama track.

With some of these musicians I had during the last years collaborations in my lecture performances: When doing my first lecture performance 2011 in Rome, I asked Mushy, who said of herself that she originally was inspired to make music by Zero Kama, to accompany my lecture with some electronic sounds.

And when I realized within Anna Khodorkovskaya's online art project REALITY RAUM RESIDENZ my one week durational performance Performative Thinking Acts I invited the musicians and bands of this compilation to contribute live concerts via skype. One of these artists was Shazzula, a Belgian psychedelic experimental musician, dj and filmmaker from Belgium, who made for my performance at REALITY RAUM RESIDENZ a video, of which I want to show you now one extract.

Yet the influence of Zero Kama was not restricted to the field of dark ambient music, also death metal bands had a special relation to Zero Kama. In 1991 the Greek metal band Rotting Christ used a Zero Kama sample at the end of their song *Forest of N'Gai*, and in 2005 the American death metal band Hate Eternal used not only a Zero Kama sample for their song I Monarch, but also had in their video a young actor who impersonated me handling the bones, playing the instruments and drinking blood, very similar as it could be seen on the few existing fotos of Zero Kama.

The only full cover version of a Zero Kama track I know so far finally comes from Saint Petersburg in Russia from a guy who calls himself senselessness. On the album *814! – Split* published in 2013 a somehow modified version of Azure-lidded Woman from *The Secret Eye of L.A.Y.L.A.H.* can be found.

All these videos can be found on youtube, and if you google Zero Kama, you can also find things like that: This is just one further example of what can become reality when you don't care at all to promote your own work. As can be seen, the seeds I planted with Zero Kama still continue to bear strange fruits, and even if it was not always easy for me to mention the project in my biography, Zero Kama cannot be thought away from my life and has now become a vital part of my artistic identity.

ⁱ P-Orridge, Genesis. "Magick Squares and Future Beats." In: *Book of Lies: The Disinformation Guide to Magick and the Occult*. The Disinformation Company, 2003: 103–118 ISBN 0-9713942-7-X

ⁱⁱ This interest seems to have been shared also by Cosey Fanni Tutti, as she wrote to me in 1983 in response to my request for a contribution to *The Beast 666* Compilation, that she is indeed influenced by Aleister Crowley, but wants to keep this a private matter (Letter by Cosey Fanni Tutti, dated 16. 8. 1983).

ⁱⁱⁱ Undated letter of Graeme Revell (around 1983).